

As It Was In The Beginning

OR

THE HISTORIC PRINCIPLE APPLIED TO THE MOSAIC SCRIPTURES

BY

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DEDICATED TO BIBLE STUDENTS

"In the beginning was the Word."



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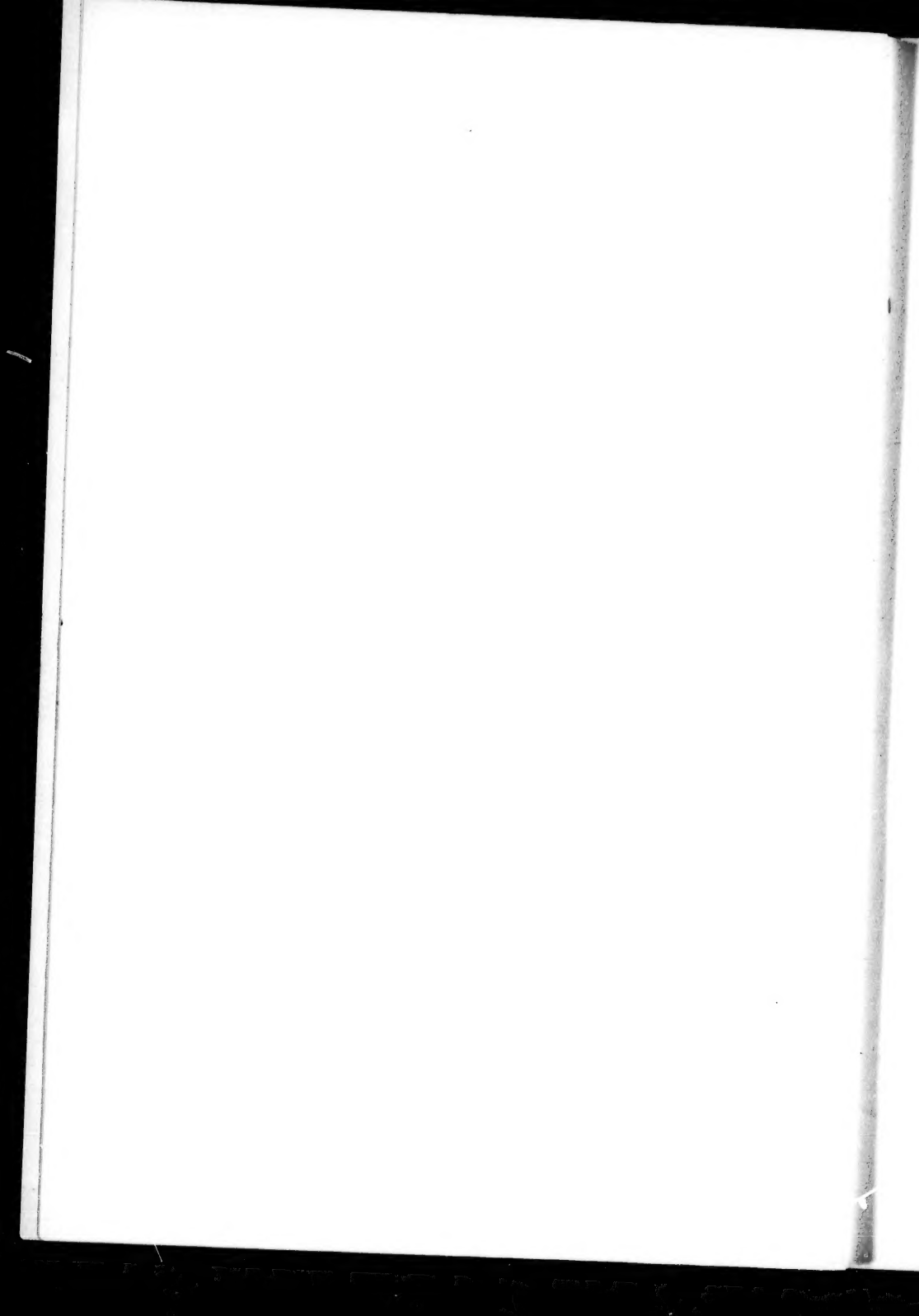
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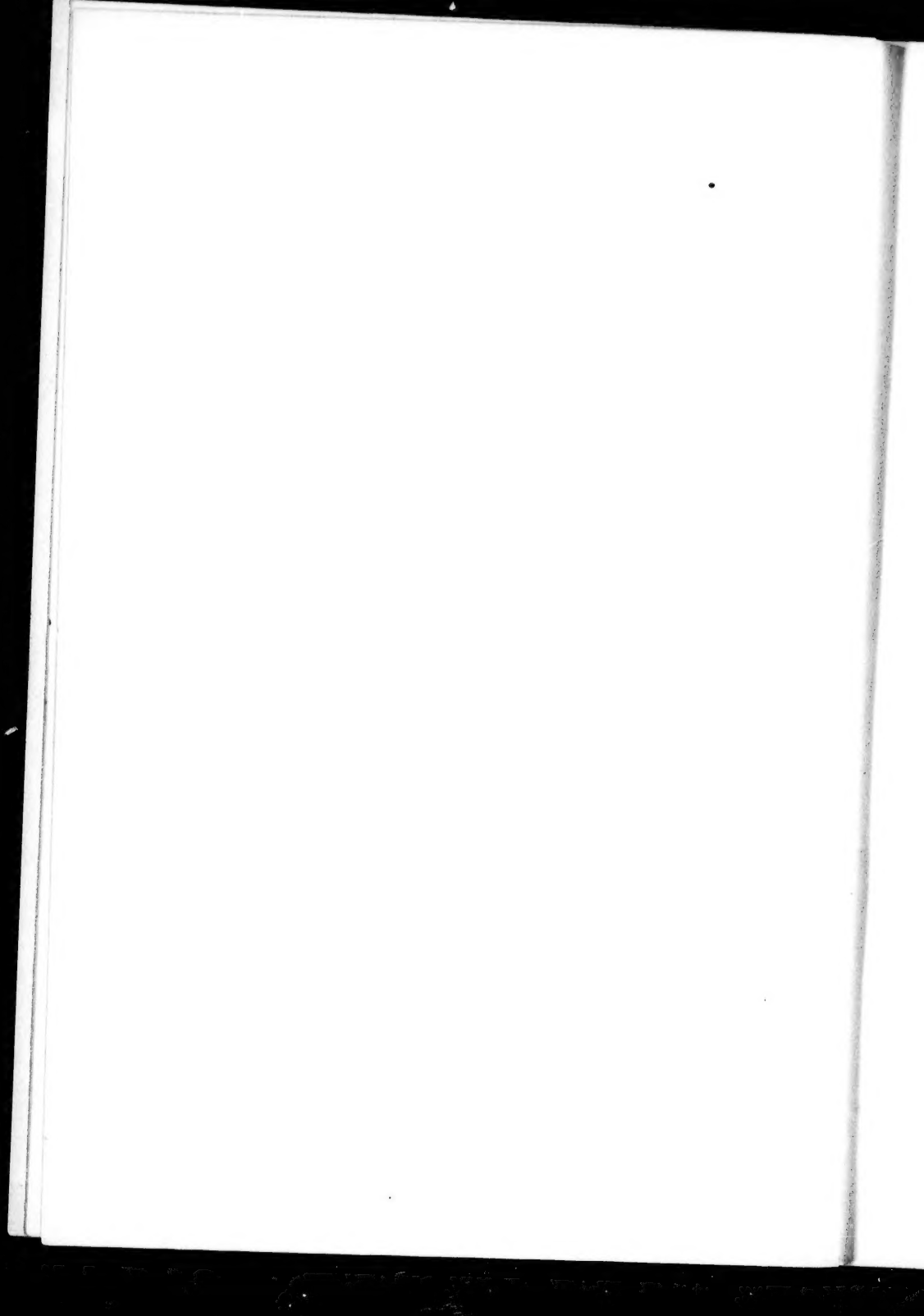
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The subject of the following pages, as of all Bible teaching, is "the testimony of Jesus"; and their object, to draw from the very beginning of the Bible the truth that by him, Jesus, were all things created; and not only so, but also that by and through him, as his Angel or Messenger, God ruled in the affairs of men in their divers dispensations.

How far the principle on which we proceed is justly applied is for the reader to judge. For the brevity due to our limited space we must ask his kind indulgence if not his closer attention.



As It Was In The Beginning

THE EDUCATION OF JESUS.

On a certain occasion, when Jesus was on earth among men, speaking as man never spoke, the Jews, wondering, said one to another, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Not that they meant that he could not read or write, but that, in the scholastic sense, he was what we call uneducated; illiterate; spoke with the Galilean accent, a part of the country where the people sat in darkness, and where, among the common sort, what is called scholarship was unknown. For no other reason, the council, later on, judged Peter and John "to be ignorant and unlearned men." They could have "perceived" it in no other way than by their speech and dress. They knew nothing further of them than this: "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." They were all Galileans together. Their "speech betrayed them." For the same reason, no doubt, did the polished inhabitants of the city conclude that Jesus was unlettered, or illiterate, devoid of the advantages of a polite education, had not been to college, or, like his apostle afterwards, been brought up at the feet of some learned Gamaliel. Doubtless it was this, no less than his youth, that so astonished the learned doctors in the temple. This Galilean boy, speaking

with a strong provincial accent, betraying his destitution of much that they were accustomed to regard as scriptural learning or rabbinical lore, could, nevertheless, answer their questions; turn to Isaiah and the prophets, and, in all probability, though unobtrusively—for he had not yet begun his ministry—taught them more than ever they knew before.

For, let us remember, Jesus was ever conformed to his surroundings. Looking at his whole course and conduct, we cannot conceive that he differed from his countrymen in dress, manners, appearance, or language, except so far as these might be affected, as in men good and true they generally are affected, by native courtesy and humility of mind. Still less can we imagine that he was graced with surpassing beauty of form, or appeared with a halo of glory around his head. Such ideas are little consonant with the prophecies which went before on him, or with the mission on which he was sent into the world, implying, as they would do, a bar to that intimate and affectionate intercourse with his fellows which ever marked his conduct, and procured for him among the well-disposed such a ready acceptance of his instructions. Had he appeared in a god-like form, or with preternatural signs of divinity, would the proud Pharisee have treated him with such disdain, and refused him the common courtesies of life? Here was a poor man, in mean attire, worn and dusty with travel, in no wise differing in language or appearance from the crowd of Galileans whom the learned Pharisee looked down upon as the dust beneath his feet; a man who, according to prophecy, was raised up out of the people; in short a man in whom there was no beauty that any should

desire him; was it worth while, the Pharisee would think, to treat him with a ceremony due only to equals? He had invited him to his table, indeed, as a noted individual, with whose doings every tongue was busy; a sort of lion that he might exhibit to his friends—but he did not fail to mark, as such people well know how to mark, the social gulf which lay between them. It was not grammar, or scholarship, or conventional politeness, that taught Jesus with such tenderness, and at the same time with such consummate wisdom, so to point out to his ungracious host his fault as must surely have made him ashamed of his unjust partiality.

“WHO ART THOU?”

The sole ground of the Jews' contention against Jesus was his claim to be a teacher sent from God. The dictates of their own wayward and wilful minds were the only incentive of their disputations. “Ye WILL not come unto me that ye may have life.” As their contention grew more bitter, he spake more plainly. It would seem as if they had made his provincial accent and diction an excuse for not understanding him. “Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my words.” Then when they asked him, “Who art thou?” he answered, “Even the same that am speaking unto you from the beginning.” The passage is difficult to translate. There is a tone of mystery in it which accords well with his frequent reserve when speaking of his mission; and with the angel's words when speaking of him to Mary—“that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee”—and with the

attribute ascribed to him by the apostle, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." "I am that who am also speaking to you from the beginning." And what time he means by this beginning is implied in his following words concerning the devil, who, he said, was a murderer from the BEGINNING. That he would impress them with a sense of his divinity, without making a direct statement concerning it, may also be gathered from his words, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM," and, "If ye believe not that I AM, ye will die in your sins," language in striking agreement with that in which he had revealed himself to Moses. "I AM hath sent me unto you." That it should have been rendered obscure in our versions by the insertion of a superfluous word seems matter of regret.

EDUCATION IN THE GARDEN.

Our Lord's reference to the "beginning" leads us to consider the first chapter of human history, wherein the work of the devil, of whom the Lord spoke as a liar and a murderer from the beginning, is found written. In taking this line we have no intention of entering on a formal exposition or history, but rather of showing, first, the harmony of the narrative with the words of Jesus, implying that from the beginning he had pursued the task for which he had eventually come into the world, the task, namely, of bringing the devil's work to nought; secondly, its harmony with the scriptures generally; thirdly, the consistency of the narrative with itself, and with all its related circumstances.

Not in any formal order do we seek to elicit these harmonies, but only as our references require; believing that the principle on which we proceed, and which we shall state more fully later on, will commend itself to every fair and candid mind.

The hope, so familiar to every reader of the Bible, as entertained by mothers in Israel, the hope, namely, of bearing or becoming the ancestress of the child who should destroy the works of the devil, was first cherished in the breast of the woman who had fallen prey to his wiles. Grief and resentment were in her mind when she bewailed her fall in words now unhappily so familiar in human experience. "The serpent BEGUILED me, and I did eat." This was both a virtual confession of her fault, and a natural expression of that indignation which every one who has been deceived feels towards his betrayer. She had not been human had she not desired retribution on the corrupter of her innocence. She saw her sinful credulity to her sorrow and shame, but, like every sincere penitent, she was not left without hope. Before a word of reproof was uttered by her Judge, he spake as a Savior, and she knew and believed, however imperfectly she may have understood, the sentence that her seed—a child born of her—should avenge her wrong, and bruise the serpent's head. So when Cain was born her grief was changed into exultation, and she said, "I have gotten a man, Jehovah." As if she would say, Rejoice not against me, O my enemy: though I have fallen, I shall arise. I am winner now. Her faith was not a delusion, though the way of deliverance was as yet a mystery. More was understood, though not all, when, in the fulness of time,

another woman bore a son, and called him by this name, Jesus—Jehovah Savior, and said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."

Though sorrowful Eve was yet to learn by bitter experience that her hope was deferred, it was not extinguished. It did not perish with that elder son, or his elect and murdered brother. For when, after this terrible disappointment, she bare another son and called his name Seth, she exclaimed in the confidence of faith, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew." It is plain that at some time, during Cain's lifetime, she had seen cause to transfer her hope from Cain to Abel. The younger son had become heir to the promise, or she would not have spoken of Seth as coming into his room. The real cause of Cain's wrath against his brother here becomes apparent. It was not mortified pride, but a substantial loss, that enraged him. The rejection of his own offering, and the acceptance of his brother's sacrifice, were proof conclusive—unless he repented—of his own disinheritance. The sentence was from the Lord himself. As he did not repent, though given a merciful opportunity, Abel would become the inheritor of the promise and of the good appertaining thereto. This good was not, in Cain's estimation, religious privilege, or spiritual blessedness, but wealth and power in the earth, which, through the ages, ever went with the birthright. Infuriated with the loss of a rich inheritance, and inflamed with envy at his brother's good fortune, he first quarrelled with him, and then slew him. His mental condition was in full accord with all that we

know of human nature when left to itself. Impelled by the self-same passions, Esau would have killed his brother, Jacob, who had obtained the birthright over his head, and along with it, besides the mysterious blessing, the promise of temporal power and ascendancy. Cain's deed is at the head of a long series of crimes of equal or greater flagrancy committed by men for the sake of an earthly inheritance.

Returning to Eve, we can hardly read her history with attention without feeling that there is scarcely a greater example of faith on record than that of the first woman. There is no severer test of trust in God than disappointed hope. When, to a believer, looking for peace, there comes trouble, of the sorest kind—inconsistent, as it seems, with the divine promise and the divine tenderness,—this is a disappointment hard to be borne; and on account of this many turn back, and become a spectacle to those who deride such hopes. No greater shock of faith can be imagined than that which befell Eve. She had heard the declaration that a child born of her should avenge her wrong, and that an eternal hatred should subsist between her and her betrayer. What sorrowful forebodings then must have oppressed her mind as she saw the son of her hope developing in his character, as he grew up, the seeds of ungodliness; what horror, what despair, what indignation, must have torn her breast when Abel's corpse was brought home, and at the same moment she learned that Cain was sent forth a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth. She might well say, "My strength, and my hope have perished from the Lord." Cain, her joy, Abel, her solace; both gone. Instead of victory, defeat; instead of gladness, gar-

ments rolled in blood—surely no mind without grace could have borne the ordeal, or continued to call upon God after this. Her holding fast her confidence in such a dire extremity, seems to equal her with Job, who said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." So unfaltering and firm was her assurance, that, when Seth was born, she did not ask herself what was the use of hoping any more; this one will be as the others; but taking the child to her heart as the assurance of her hope and faith in God she awaited the fulfilment of his word. Whence her confidence arose we shall consider later on.

The bitter sorrows of the mother of our race attract the mind to the minutest part of her history, just as each circumstance concerning the childhood of a noted personage is ever read with interest. The narrative, though brief, is not scant, and is couched in terms of such simplicity and plainness as afford a ready and attractive field of inference; and though our deductions have not the force of authority, yet, if they be in accordance with life and nature, they may help us in judging the writer's meaning. The mind ever does this in histories where much is left to the reader's reflection, and the more the harmony between them and their unexpressed relations appears, the more is the mind persuaded of the truth of the story. With this view we may go a little back from Eve's sorrowful experience, and consider awhile the antecedents of the first man and the first woman.

We know not how long Adam lived before a help meet for him in the person of the first woman was brought to him. We can, however, easily discern three periods in his history.

First, his infancy. As God is never represented as doing miraculously for man what man can do naturally for himself, it is inconceivable that he was formed at once in the full maturity of manhood, whether of body or mind. Ignorant of the laws of nature, how could he, left to himself, escape destruction by precipice or flood, or other dangers of his surroundings? But if we conceive him formed as an infant child, the means of his nurture and education—in full harmony with a period in which the Creator of all things was personally present—are not far to seek. If angels came and ministered to the second man in the wilderness, it is surely not too much to believe that angels ministered to the first man in his infancy. This is no wild speculation, but is in full harmony with the scriptures. In the epistle to the Hebrews we read the apostle's judgment as to the service on which the angels are employed. They are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for their sake who shall become heirs of salvation" (R. V.). He intimates also that angels were employed in the ministration of the law. Also, when Jacob was returning to his home, the angels of God met him. Besides which, as the second Adam came into the world a helpless babe, it seems but just to conclude that the first Adam, who was his type, came in like manner; and whence should the service needed in such a state come to him but as it came to Jesus, namely, through the ministry of angels. Surely no other interpretation is in such accord with the scriptures, and with nature itself.

The second period is that in which, having come to maturity, the work of an industrious life was

given him to do. Having spent a happy and instructive childhood in a garden where all the beauties of nature were displayed in charming diversity, the charge of the garden itself was put into his hands. The transition from one period to the other is marked by a new and expressive term, which, however, does not appear in our versions. "The Lord took the man whom he had formed, and 'RESTED' or SETTLED him in the garden to dress it and to keep it." The free and roaming, but surely not unguided or unprotected, life which befitted the period of childhood and youth, gave place to the restfulness (not idleness) of a settled employment. As a youth approaches maturity, he naturally thinks of what his proper business in life is to be; and his speculations are set at rest when at length he finds it clearly marked out for him. The man had not been human had he not thus looked to the future, or had he been indifferent to this promotion; and the repetition of the fact that he was put into the garden had been a mere tautology, unworthy of the writer, were it not to indicate a change in his condition.

The third period is that in which more important matters awaited him in the dignity of the married state, and the cares of family government. Not until he proved himself worthy of it, was he promoted to this condition. He had so diligently observed and studied the nature and habits of the animal creation, that, when at length brought to the test, he was able to give appropriate names to each kind. "Whatsoever the man called every living creature that was the name (or nature) thereof"; for, in the beginning, names were significant, and not arbitrary and unmeaning as now.

We may be sure from his diligence in one branch of nature that he had not been unobservant of others, and that he had studied plants, and flowers, and pondered on the heavenly bodies, with equal assiduity. His reward was come indeed when his bride was brought to him, and when, having given names to the animals he must give her a name also. How gladly he acquitted himself of this final part of his examination, appears in the exclamation, "This, now, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this shall be called woman, because out of man was this one taken," and not, as is particularly noted above, out of the earth, like the beasts, and even man himself.

We may perhaps hesitate to apply the same line of thought to the earlier days of the woman; building, the term used of her formation, being suggestive of a more speedy process than growth. It is, however, more pleasant, and, perhaps, after all, more according to the nature of the case, to think of her as we have thought of the man; and that a long and happy childhood and girlhood, under the ministration of angels, was hers before she was brought in womanly beauty and maturity to her husband's side. Nothing is more frequent in scripture than the long spaces of time that must be understood between one step and another of the divine procedure. There would be something inexpressibly mournful in the thought that her woman's happy existence was nipped in the bud in its very beginning. And, indeed, a previous training and experience seem necessarily implied in her conversation with the tempter, who came all too soon to corrupt her innocence and ruin her peace. She

knew all about the garden and its contents, and the conditions of its enjoyment; and the desire she felt to increase in wisdom can hardly be conceived as possessing an attraction to a mind devoid of learning and instruction. We cannot doubt that she had the benefit of education before she was permitted to take upon her the cares and duties of wifehood. But more of this later on.

THE ANGEL OF GOD.

The scenes in the garden of which this one frail creature, the woman, is the chief center of interest, are the beginning of human history. The first chapter, stating the creation of man in his spiritual part, including, in common with the other creatures, provision for the sustenance of his earthly part, is not history, but information and direction. There was no need, in beginning the actual history, to restate the fact of his creation, whether of body or spirit. Nor is it done. The words, "The Lord God formed THE man dust of the ground," are not a restatement of his creation, but an allusion to it. The omission, in both our versions, of the article used throughout the narrative till after the expulsion, confuses its native perspicuity. The words clearly refer to the man as already existent, and, by a new and expressive term, suitable only to his earthly part, state how, or of what matter, he was made so far as that part was concerned. The reason of this statement becomes plain as the history proceeds. For the same thing is said of the beasts. They, too, were made out of the ground. The reason for these two statements concerning the man

and concerning the beasts now appears. In the first chapter it was said that God made man, male and FEMALE. There was no need then to restate the fact that the woman was created. But there was need to *allude* to it, to show, as we have already observed, that she was made, not as the beasts and the man himself, out of the ground, but was taken out of man's side.

With the reader's permission, we will now consider him who under the name of the LORD GOD, Jehovah Aleim, befriended the woman in the downfall to which her frailty had brought her. We observe, first, that he was the same who, in the first chapter, made all things in heaven and earth; and, secondly, that he spake in the garden as the Angel or Messenger of God, as he ever spoke on earth, both before and after his coming in the flesh.

It is a truth held by most students of scripture that the heavens and the earth were made by the Son of God, although, perhaps, not so many have inquired into the grounds on which the belief is entertained. For it is an article of the common faith to believe in God the FATHER, as the Maker of all things. But this apparent discrepancy vanishes when we are also taught that the Father made all things BY THE SON; and it is ever held correct to say that what a person does by another he does himself. Christ's part in the creation is well expressed in an ancient formula—"By whom all things were made."

To make this plain: In the first chapter we read, "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Here we see one commanding, and, by implication, another fulfilling the command. And still more plainly, "God said, Let there be a firmament, and

God made the firmament." Unless we imagine the writer childishly representing God as speaking to himself, we must understand the history to mean that two persons were engaged in the work of creation, one commanding, the other executing the command. This is the interpretation of St. John in his Gospel. He declares that it was the Son of God who, as God, was with God in this work. By a remarkable expression he draws attention to the fact that, after the various objects of creation,—the light, the firmament, sea, plants, lights, fishes, beasts,—had been made by command, when it comes to man, command is changed into counsel. "Let us make man"; the significance of this change is thus commented on by the evangelist. After saying, "All things were made by him," that is, Christ, he adds, in evident reference to man as an exception, "WITHOUT HIM [Christ] was not anything made that was made." Though he made not man by himself, as he had made the other creatures, he was not therefore excluded. "Without him" even man was not made. He was taken into counsel. We may see also why in his deputed work he is also called the WORD, for a word of command with perfect beings of necessity includes performance. The unity of the Father and the Son in nature, will, and power, allows no breach between the word and the deed. "He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast."

In the summing up of the work of creation, we find a word of singular significance, which both implies the subjection of the Son to the Father, and, used in this connection, marks him as the *Angel* of God, sent forth to do his will. "On the

seventh day, God ended all his work which he had done;" not, I think, the work which he had "made," as in our versions, which is hardly an English idiom, but the SERVICE which he had performed, the TASK which he had fulfilled, as God's Angel or Servant. It is the first time in the Bible that the word is used; and it is remarkable, in that it contains the word which is afterwards translated "angel." This also is in harmony with our Lord's own words in reference to the work of redemption which he brought to a conclusion afterwards in the flesh. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," not the work which thou gavest me to make. The work was not the things which he had made, but the task which he had performed in making them. As the Angel of God he spoke in the garden; and as the Angel of God he was known to those to whom he spoke. But before considering this more fully we must notice the change in his name.

HIS NAME.

The work of creation being ended, and human history begun, we notice the important fact that he who made all things at the Father's command is called by a new name. It is necessary to repeat emphatically that the Person who, in the work of creation is called GOD, is the same Person who, in the history, is called the LORD GOD, Jehovah Aleim. The significance of this change of name is what we have now to consider.

The prominence given to names is a marked feature in this history. God gave names to the

things which he made,—the light, the darkness, the firmament, the earth, the seas, and man. The man gave names to every living creature, ending with his wife. Eve gave names to her children. Those names were not arbitrary contrivances for identity after the manner of men. Each had its own significance. No one can read this narrative with attention, and not perceive that every word has weight, and is exactly suited to its place, for which reason we may say that this history has that much-coveted quality in literature which we call elegance, or pertinent choice of the right word. Seeing then the importance here given to names, as pertaining to all the creatures, it is not to be supposed that the change in the Son's name was idle. Nor is the reason of it far to seek. For we observe this first of all that it was God's way, when he employed persons in any new service, or new term of service, or ordained them to any new destiny, he changed their names. The instances of this are so numerous in the Old Testament that they will occur to every reader, while many forcible examples of the same are found in the New. The justice of its application to the Son of God in this new appointment is the more obvious seeing that a new name was given to him afterwards when he entered on his new period of work as son of man, whom it behooved in all things to be made like unto his brethren. He who, on taking charge of the human family in the garden, was called JEHOVAH Aleim, was, when he appeared in the flesh to redeem mankind, called JEHOVAH Savior.

Before making application of this truth to the question immediately before us, it may be interest-

ing to note the fact that the names of the faithful are said to be written in a book. The commandments of God were written by the finger of God. If we had one word written by the finger of Jesus, it would be esteemed above all relics. We read of one occasion on which Jesus wrote; and I suppose many have speculated in their minds what it might be that he wrote. We may be sure that it was something of great importance, and its being on record makes it a just subject of interpretation. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Whether spoken or written, they will endure forever. Is there any means by which we may reasonably gather, not the exact words, but the import of what he wrote? I believe, that by the application of the apostle's rule for the study of the Scriptures given in one of his epistles, namely, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, we may learn something of what might otherwise seem obscure. I think we may without presumption inquire into the meaning of the things which Jesus did, as well as of what he said. In one of the prophecies of Jeremiah it was written that because Israel had forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters, their names should be written, not in heaven but in the earth. The words are remarkable. "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be WRITTEN IN THE EARTH, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters." Now it was just after speaking of himself as the fountain of living waters, that Jesus, in the midst of his adversaries, stooped down and wrote (not on the floor or on the pavement, but) on "the

earth,"—the very word of the prophet. Afterwards he said to them, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above. Where I am thither you cannot come." As if to say, Your names are written on the earth with the disobedient, and not in heaven with the faithful. And another prophecy to the same effect says of the same people, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." Is it out of harmony with the occasion to suppose that what our Lord wrote may have had reference to Israel's irrevocable doom, as foretold by the prophets?

But to return to God's way of calling by a new name those whom he appoints to a new work; and to seek a reason for the change of name to which we are referring.

It may, however, be here observed that the word Aleim, God, in the first chapter, is more properly an appellation of deity than a name, though, for the sake of perspicuity, we will still speak of Jehovah as a new name.

Now as a new name was given to the Son when he was born into the world, the name Jehovah being retained and a new name added; and as this was done because he entered on a new period of service as Son of Man; so a new name was added to the first, when, having served God in the creation, he now began to serve him in government. As the name Jesus was an implicit token of his divine mission in the flesh to perfect man's salvation, the name Jehovah was an implicit token of his investiture with sovereign command over the children of men, just as a proxy, duly accredited, bears for the occasion the name of the principal, and lawfully acts in

his stead. The name Jehovah, then, did not independently inhere in the Son, but was communicated to him by God, to whom, as God, it originally belongs, and who bears it forever. Thus when God warned Israel not to provoke his angel, he added, for MY NAME is in him. And as the name Jehovah belongs to God, therefore the scripture says, "Jehovah our God is one JEHOVAH." The name is one. "In the NAME of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." It is the Father's name first. "Hallowed be thy name." Being the Son's name also by communication, it is historical. We know when it was given and why. The question in the Book of Job, "What is his name, and what his Son's name, if thou canst tell," shows how early this thought was in the minds of God's people, seeking something more than the letter, but the spirit and meaning of the name. It is plain, then, from scripture that the name Jehovah is less an appellation of Deity than a name, adopted by God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—in reference to the purpose in which each is concerned, the purpose of man's salvation. It stands at the beginning of the scriptures, and, being applied to the Son, marks his pre-eminence—the pre-eminence of Him who gave himself as a sacrifice to this very end. We must not shrink from the full testimony of the scripture, however men may construe it, that God promised eternal life before the world began. The harmony of this truth with the scriptures at large appears in this that when a man turns to God he is called by a new name. This is made clear in the promise made to each such person, "I will write upon him my new name."

THE NAME KEPT SECRET.

We must further observe, as needful to the understanding of the mystery, that the name Jehovah, in its ultimate import, was kept secret through the early ages. The revelation of Jesus was partial and progressive. "Why dost thou ask after my name," he said to Jacob, bestowing upon him his blessing, but not answering his question. And to Manoah he said, "Why asked thou thus after my name, seeing that it is wonderful?" The sound of the name was familiar, but its significance was not yet understood. "His name shall be called "Wonderful," said a prophet in a later age. Also, when bringing his people out of Egypt, he said to Moses, "I am Jehovah; And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but my name Jehovah was I not known to them." The combining of the name with the person who speaks in this passage is untranslatable, but significant. There is the same air of mystery about it as we have noticed in the words of Jesus to a similar effect. The word "by," found in both our versions, is not in the original. Now we know that the fathers did call upon that name, nor, in the passage quoted, is it denied; but its full import was as yet a mystery; just as in life, people, especially children, may call a person by a certain name, and yet little know all that the name imports. A father reveals himself to a child in tender embraces, and gifts suitable to its age, while the rich inheritance which the relation ultimately assures is beyond its understanding. The personal experience of the fathers concerning Jehovah's promises was mainly confined to temporal

goods, the higher benefits to come were but darkly hinted at, as when he said that, in the full development of his purpose, men should tremble and fear for all the goodness that he would procure for them, so wonderful would it be. This ignorance of the patriarchs concerning the import of a name so familiar to them in sound should occasion little surprise when we remember how the disciples of Jesus themselves, after years of intercourse, still remained ignorant of all that was implied in a name so familiar to their lips. At the very end of his ministry he could still say to one of them, "Have I been so long time with you—and hast thou not known me?"

The name Jehovah, then, is not a word of four letters, producing a certain sound, but a name which points to the QUALITY of the person who bears it. "I am what I am"; and what he is is plainly declared in Ex. 34:5-7. "And Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed THE NAME OF JEHOVAH. And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth: keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty: visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." As if to say, This is my name. I AM all this. By this we may understand what is meant when it is said, "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." It is specially applicable to the Jews, who, while they revered the letter of the name, knew not

the WORD which declared its meaning; the loving kindness and truth of him who bore it. Instances will occur to the reader's mind of persons in ancient and modern times attaching a supernatural virtue to a name, while entirely ignorant of its true significance. None knew this name perfectly till Jesus appeared. The name Jehovah is now rarely used, except, perhaps, rhetorically, in Christian phraseology. The name, Jesus, which includes it, has taken its place. None the less is the saying true, "This is my name forever." He was with the church in the wilderness, he is with his church to the end of the world, bearing the name which is above every name, Jehovah the Savior. By this is he divinely, as well as humanly, distinguished from Jehovah, the Father, and from Jehovah, the Spirit ("the Lord the Spirit").

It is plain, let us say again, from this divine unfolding of the name, Jehovah, that it has reference only to God's dealings with men as sinners, and that, apart from this relation, it does not appertain to the Deity. And as it was given to the Son of God before sin entered into the world, we can see the ground of the apostolic interpretations that the salvation of mankind, and the sacrifice by which it was accomplished, were pre-determined before the world began. However some may stumble at this interpretation, it must certainly be taken into account of we would understand the scriptures. (Rom. 9: 21).

SATAN'S FRAUDULENT DEVICE.

The nature of the fraud by which Satan led the woman to transgress is so variously interpreted that

the reader will, I trust, bear with a somewhat closer examination into the narrative than we may sometimes be apt to give it. It may then, perhaps, appear that the obscurity of which some complain is not in the narrative itself, but arises out of preconceived notions, or an imperfect apprehension of the significance of names and terms, or from want of adverting to its necessarily implied relations.

When Satan said to Jesus that he would, on a certain condition, give him all the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them, and added that all that was within his right, he manifestly appealed to the authority of God as supreme over all, and virtually, and, in a sense, lawfully, claimed that by God's appointment he was the prince or god of this world. He denied not the authority of God himself, but only of the Son of God. If Jesus would give up this pretension, and promise fealty to himself, he would make him supreme over all earthly sovereigns. He assumed precisely the same attitude in the garden as he afterwards did in the wilderness. He wanted to persuade the woman that he who, as God's Angel or Messenger, had forbidden them to eat the fruit of a certain tree, had no authority from God to impose such a restriction. This is implied in the question, "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" As if to say, You may have been told it, but hath God said it? He did not, you will observe, say, Hath Jehovah Aleim said it? He ignored him; did not mention his name. He spoke only of God, and that in the way in which he is generally referred to in the scriptures, as the supreme invisible Being, who makes known his will by angels or messengers.

In this view we must assume that he claimed, as he did claim in the wilderness, that he himself had authority from God. And, in truth, he was an angel, though fallen, and in God's sovereign will and pleasure was sent on his errands. A signal proof of this you will find in 1 Kings 22: 19-22. How to beget the woman's belief and confidence in his pretensions was, of necessity, the first thing to be considered. Here we come upon a much controverted question. Surely the last thing to be thought of would be to appear before her in the form of a speaking serpent, a venomous reptile. To suppose this would be to assume, what is out of all reason, that the brute creatures were different then from what they are now. Knowing their natures and qualities as it is certain from the narrative her husband, and therefore herself, did know them, such a prodigy could only alarm and repel her. All the charms of language with which poets have sought to describe the beast, and render its action harmonious with the occasion, must fail to reconcile us to such an interpretation. It was surely the character, and not the form, that was here intended. To call a person a serpent, whose beauteous aspect clothes a deceitful mind, is a very common mode of speech; and to assume a guise which will attract, and not repel, is the invariable rule of tempters and seducers. A more reasonable interpretation is suggested by an apostle, namely, that Satan tempted the woman in the form of an angel of light. We can see then how, clothed with angelic radiance, he would obtain a favorable and ready hearing, and cause the woman neither dread nor surprise. She would regard him as one of those heavenly visitants

with whom she had been conversant in all her bringing up, and, therefore, as one to be welcomed by her as a sure and trusty friend.

But further. The reader may have noticed in his question a certain abruptness, which seems to imply a something going before and leading to it. He spoke as if he had learned something which had caused him surprise. A little further consideration will show that what he professed to have been told was not that which they had really been forbidden to do. Still he asked, Was it true that they might not eat of every tree of the garden? Had God said it? The woman, hastening to correct this mistake, and informing him that it was not of the trees of the garden, but of a tree in the midst of the garden, that they might not eat, gave him the opening which he plainly aimed at, namely, a statement from her own lips of the real grievance. He could now insinuate that even the restraint which he had supposed at first would have done them a wrong, but this much more. He might not have ventured to advise her in the matter, had she not stated it with her own lips, but now he would give her the reasons why such a restraint on their freedom could not have come from God. It is a common device of those who would poison their interlocutor's mind against another person to begin with some trifling injury in the way of innocent inquiry, and when they have elicited from his own lips the real matter of complaint, to direct their arguments to that. Had Satan begun at once on the more serious aspect of the case, and on his own initiative proceeded to urge her to disregard what she had believed to be a command of God, it might prema-

turely have alarmed her conscience, and set her on the defensive, but the way being now prepared by this avowal from herself, he had already set her on the road to compliance. It is difficult not to see already a note of exaggeration, if not of discontent, in the readiness and fulness with which she stated the restraint under which they labored. It may well be that even before this, while innocent of any thought of disobedience, her curiosity had been piqued, and her desire awakened, as to what this knowledge of good and evil might be from which they were debarred. But now that the question was raised through her own doing, the subtle suggestion of unfair treatment would naturally prepare her to listen to the tempter's argument. Perhaps Satan never aimed a more polished shaft against human integrity, or more skilfully prepared the soul for the reception of evil seed, than in this device. The way was now open for his main assault. He would by no means persuade her to rebel against God, but he would show her that she had been deceived in supposing that the restriction in question came from God. It was not worthy of his goodness, and his desire for their perfection. So far from proving fatal, their eating the fruit would have a beneficial effect. He said nothing of any enjoyment of a sensual nature attendant upon the act. He insisted only upon one thing. It would make them intellectually like God himself. Their eyes would be opened, and they would know good and evil. To be like God was the end of their being. They were made in the image of God, nor could that image be perfected so long as they allowed such a restraint upon their liberty to remain. It is plain from the

purely intellectual character of the tempter's argument, that he was not of the opinion that the woman could be won, as some suppose she was won, by a mere appeal to her sensual appetites.

The subtle manner in which the tempter proceeded to undermine the woman's confidence, shows that he did not expect her to fall an easy prey to his design. Perhaps the writers of the New Testament had this history in mind when they spoke of the depths of Satan, and appealed to believers as not being ignorant of his devices.

The woman did not yield without reflection. She listened as one accountable for her actions. She reasoned with herself, as all do who are tempted to change their minds on a matter of importance, in which a mistake might be fatal. The penalty in this case was death, and was not lightly to be incurred. The beauty of the forbidden object, its voluptuous charms, and, above all, the aid it would be to their intellectual advancement, seized upon her imagination, and captured her sense, and disposed her to accept the tempter's reasoning as valid. "When she saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." This word, "saw," indicates not only bodily sight, but intellectual vision and judgment. It was used of God himself. "God saw everything which he had made and behold it was very good"; so the woman, weighing the merits and circumstances of the case, saw reason to yield to the tempter's arguments. And here we see the force of the apostle's conclusion that the woman

sinned because she was DECEIVED. She did not wilfully rebel against God. She suffered herself to be persuaded that God had given no such command, and that he who had delivered the message, as from him, had deceived them. Here was the fatal element in the act of transgression. It was a defection from the Son of God, God's messenger; and this is the source of all evil. Her husband was not deceived. By what process of reasoning or by the influence of what motive, he gave in to his wife, we know not. We only know that the apostasy begun by her, being now confirmed by himself, the head, delivered the family of mankind to Satan's dominion; and the work of the Son of God, in due time to be called Jesus, henceforth became remedial. This is a mystery, but it is the plain teaching of the Gospel.

We will, however, ask the reader's indulgence for some further remarks on the harmony of this narrative with all that was subsequently revealed. We cannot for a moment suppose that the Lord God—Jesus who was to be—who, as God's messenger, was ever with them in the garden, had failed to warn them of the temptation by which their constancy would be tried. Their resistance, indeed, must be of their own free will; but it would be to misconceive his dealings with men throughout the ages to imagine that he allowed the trial to come upon them unawares. In the flesh he constantly warned his disciples of the temptations to which they would be exposed; yet even so they sometimes fell. As the man knew the qualities of all living creatures, and therefore knew the quality of the serpent, that it was more subtle than any beast of the field which

the Lord God had made, the creature might well become a figure in the Lord's mouth for their instruction. This was his way with his disciples when on earth. "Consider the lilies of the field," he said, "how they grow"; so might he say, Consider this creature, how, by its wiles, it prevails over its weak and unsuspecting prey. Let them beware of one who would practice similar wiles on themselves to draw them away from God. In this light the woman's confession appears natural, when, her eyes being open to the fraud of which she had become the unsuspecting victim, she perceived that this was the person against whose wiles they had been warned. She could now give the false angel his true name. "The SERPENT beguiled me and I did eat."

Let us further observe that the above interpretation of Satan's attitude towards Jehovah Aleim is in harmony with the Jews' attitude toward him when he appeared in the flesh. They accused him of deception when he claimed to come to them with a message from God. "He deceiveth the people," they said. In return, he plainly told them that, in assuming this attitude, they were copying the devil himself. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father ye will do." The devil's desire in the garden was to prevail upon the woman to assume this very attitude of resistance to the authority of the Son of God. He who tempted the Jews to deny him, was the same who tempted the founders of their race to deny him. And this is still more plain from the fact that he tempted the Son of God even to deny himself.

We have now to show that the figurative language

in which this narrative is in part conveyed is in harmony with the language of the Old Testament throughout. The words and actions of the man and woman are expressed in language simply human. Not so of the spiritual beings on whom they depended for good or evil. Through all the ages Christ was represented under a veil of imagery. Satan, though not, like Christ, dignified by being made a direct object of prophecy, surrounded by glorious mystery, but rather alluded to as a vile and noxious creature, biting at the heels of his divine antagonist in his march to victory, is often covertly referred to, in one way or another, as present with God's servants as an adversary, exulting in their fall, persecuting their souls, tearing them like a lion, smiting their life down to the ground, making them to dwell in darkness which was death-like and desolate, language little appropriate to fleshly enemies, but very pertinent to assaults of a mighty spirit of evil. On the other hand, the power and presence of the most High, rendering impotent those attacks, make the figure of a sorry serpent in the highest degree forcible and significant. "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Like the beast which prefigured him, his ways should be prone and vile, and his designs abortive. The prophet, describing the peace and glory prepared for God's people under various similitudes, adds, "And dust shall be the serpent's meat." Dust was to be the outcome of all his craft and malice, the product and prey of all his power and sovereignty. The pertinency of this

figure, however mysterious at the beginning, is plainly perceived in the light of the Gospel. There is in it even a literality which is very striking. For as he had brought death upon the human family, and is even said to have the power of death, the futility of it all will appear when the very dead shall shake off their earthly habiliments, and enter into eternal life and glory. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in DUST: thy dew is as the dew of herbs: and the earth shall cast forth her dead." This is all that will remain for the devil of all his craft and toil; the dust of the saints.

Although we must admit that God may, if he pleases, appoint a purely arbitrary test of obedience, it is very difficult, I think, to recognize such a test in this history as generally understood. That death and condemnation should come upon mankind as a punishment for eating an apple—as some like to put it—seems harsh and feeble, and out of all keeping with human thought and divine procedure. As Satan himself is represented under a figure, it is but reasonable to suppose that the evil which he brought upon mankind, and the instrument of that evil, should be expressed under a figure also. A tree is a common figure in the scriptures, and usually represents a community of persons,—a family, a nation, a church. If, then, this tree, the tree of knowledge, of good, and of evil, be taken as a figure, say of the world, it will, I think, be found not only in harmony with the scripture—which says, "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah"—but in accord also with the truth that "the sin of the world"—that sin which the Lamb of God taketh away—is not denial of God,

but rejection of the Son of God, and the virtual acceptance of Satan as Prince in his stead. The world actually began when man, obeying the devil's counsel and will, virtually accepted him as his liege. Nor does the fact that the world till then had no existence go against this truth. If Satan, as we know, had power to present to the mind of Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, though invisible to his sight, it cannot be doubted that he had power to present to the imagination of the woman such a picture of the glory of his dominion and its delights, as would powerfully work upon her natural desires. In comparison with this, the fruits of the garden would appear mean, its limits narrow, and the occupation they had hitherto pursued contemptible. It is the worldly spirit ever, and must have had a beginning; and that it began then, immediately appeared in the man's posterity. Cain was the first fruit of Satan's kingdom, the kingdom of which man's apostasy was the root and beginning.

Further we may perceive from the narrative itself that the tree of knowledge also must be taken in the figurative sense. For at the very time of his creation, God gave man unlimited use of the products of the earth. "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and EVERY TREE in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." The grant is absolute, and it is not conceivable that one tree should afterwards be reserved, of which they might not eat. The grant was equally absolute, when the command was given to abstain from the tree of knowledge. It runs thus, "Of EVERY TREE

OF THE GARDEN thou mayest FREELY eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it." The distinction between the trees of the garden and the tree of knowledge is plainly marked. Still more plainly, if possible, is it marked in the answer of the woman to the serpent's question concerning this very prohibition, "We may eat of the fruit of THE TREES OF THE GARDEN; but of the fruit of the tree which is IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN God hath said, ye shall not eat of it." If the latter were a natural tree, then it was a tree of the garden, and the distinction at once becomes plain.

The language also in which the tree of life is described is similar to this. It was not a tree of the garden, but a tree in the midst of the garden. I suppose no one in his right mind can deny that this was a figure, or imagine that the scripture teaches that the fruit of any natural tree—an apple, a fig, or what not—can give life forever to any that should eat thereof; or that any tree which ever grew could heal the nations who ate of its leaves, as in the Book of the Revelation is said. And as the tree of life gives life by a virtue in itself, so it is consistent to suppose that the tree of knowledge caused death by a quality inherent in itself. This agrees with what is said of the corruption that is in the world through desire: showing that death is a natural consequence of sin, before it becomes a sentence upon sin. Taking the trees as figures, we see nothing but harmony. The tree of life and the tree of death; Christ and Satan; are everywhere present to tempt or to save. When a man sins, he denies that he sins against God. Who tells him so is a deceiver, and speaks without authority. Thus

the ancients charged the prophets, the Jews Jesus, the world at large Christian teachers, and even the Bible itself, with delivering commands which God has not spoken. And this antagonism began in the garden, when Satan charged the Son of God with speaking what he had no authority to speak. "Yea, hath God said?"

The divine procedure, then, the common judgment of mankind, the truth of human affairs, the analogy between the two trees, and the letter of the narrative, combine to prove that the forbidden fruit was not a natural product of the earth but a spiritual evil which in the divine wisdom was wrapped up in a mystery. Nor, I think, is that of which it is a figure far to seek. The language of scripture, not to say the language of mankind, furnishes a most perfect analogy. As spiritually minded persons are said to eat the Word of God, when they meditate on its meaning to the refreshment and delight of their souls, so do worldly persons feed on the words which describe the fascinations of sin. The world is a tree which yields such kind of fruit in abundance. As a camp of the angels of God met Jacob to cheer him on his way, so may there have been a camp of evil angels, Satan's legion, in the garden, to whose companionship its unwary inhabitants were enticed. We advance it not as a revealed truth, but only as an interpretation which is neither impossible nor discordant. And the words of the woman, whether as applied to Satan or his host, may not have been imaginary when she said that they were not even to touch the forbidden thing. So says the scripture of every evil way. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

Perhaps the attention of Bible readers is more generally directed to the deplorable consequences of the fall than to the restoration of the transgressors to pardon and peace. What we hope now to show, by a just interpretation of the narrative, is that the first sinners repented, and were forgiven, before their expulsion from the garden.

To make this plain we must go back to the words of the Lord God, declaring to the man the consequence which would follow upon disobedience. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou wilt surely die." The reader will, I trust, pardon a digression here for the better understanding of the harmony and consistency of the narrative at large.

What is death? In the account of man's creation there is a clear distinction observed between the spirit and the body. The man was first created in the image of God, and was therefore, of necessity, a spirit, God himself being a spirit. The spirit, then, is the man; the body an appendage, a dwelling, a medium through which he might hold communication with the material world in which he was to live, a means, in short, whereby he might make known and do his will therein. As the spirit and flesh cannot immediately unite, they were joined together by the soul, framed to this end, the union resulting being so perfect and harmonious as for the whole to become as one being. "God formed the man"—observe the article as marking his previous existence—"dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul"—also, in effect, a living breathing

animal. For the constitution of the whole animal creation is analogous to this, each living creature consisting of body, soul, and spirit, the difference being that the spirit of man, as made in the image of God, tends upward unto God, as the scripture says, the spirit of the beast, downwards to the earth. Thus were the spirit and the body united to make one man. Death was the dissolution of this union. It was not, of necessity, nor according to the scriptures, in fact, the extinction of the man, the spirit, but his release or dismissal from the earthly tenement. This leads at once to the distinction between death as a natural law, and death as a sentence, a distinction as plain in things human as in things divine.

The question has been asked whether, if man had not sinned, he would have died. It is a speculation with which we have really no concern. As we know the things which God has done, only so far as they are revealed, and as it is not revealed what God might have done, had he done otherwise than he has done, we can only take things as they are. We may, however, say this. The narrative makes it certain that nature at the beginning was the same as nature is now. Animals lived and died then as now. Looking to the nature of things, we are sure that no living thing of earthly formation can live forever. All living things must, by the law of nature, die, sooner or later.

But death as a sentence is not in the power of nature, but in the power of the Judge. All scripture is at one on this, that the time and manner of death are in God's hand. Man's "days are determined, the number of his months is with thee."

Now I think we gather from the narrative that the man and the woman expected nothing less than the literal fulfilment of the sentence. They knew what it was to die. Their experience of nature had shown them what it meant for life to be violently and suddenly cut off, and they were in mortal terror at the thought that their own hour was now come. When they heard the voice of the Lord God calling them, they hid themselves in fear and dread among the trees of the garden—naked, but for the scanty covering with which they had sought to clothe themselves, overwhelmed with that mysterious sense of shame, hitherto unknown, which, even under the most brutal conditions, has never since deserted the human breast, they came forth and stood before the Son of God. The particulars of their examination and of their respective destinies are familiar to the reader, and need not be recited here. But what must specially be noticed is that he did not speak to them as a Judge. What he said implied just one thing, namely, that they were respited. Sentence of death was not to be immediately executed. A future was marked out for them, the conditions of which they must abide till God's time should come for them to be taken away; the woman in sorrow to bear and bring up children, the man by the sweat of his brow to eat bread. Thus they knew of their respite. And we may take it as in harmony with all his character and dealings that this respite was procured by the mediation of Jesus. It meant salvation. It was just the case of the barren tree, which was respited for awhile that there might be opportunity of repentance and amendment. It was as true then as when he appeared in the flesh that

"God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved." Thus, through him, judgment was so tempered with mercy that death was robbed of its immediate terrors for these first sinners. A future was set before them which, though not devoid of toil and sorrow, did not mean absolute despair. The day of dissolution was yet distant, and life might yet hold some good thing in store for them.

Here this part of the narrative comes to an abrupt termination. What follows is of so entirely different a character that it of necessity implies an interval coming between in which great things were done. How, by a just interpretation, we may fill up this interval we hope to show. To make our meaning plain we may put it in this way.

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.

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And the man called his wife's name **LIFE** (Eve), because she was the mother of all living."

"Had become," would, I think, better convey the emphasis of the original.

Here is a veritable passage from death unto life. The man, instead of departing heart-broken and dejected after the above sorrowful description of his future life, became a prophet, and spoke as a prophet, and in giving his wife a new name, as good as said that old things had passed away and all things had become new. To show how this change must have come to pass is the task which now lies before us.

We have already noticed that, when a new name was given to a person, as in the case of Abraham, Jacob, and even to the Son of God himself, it signified a change of character or office, or both. According to this rule, then, the woman, receiving a new name, had become a new creature, with a new calling or purpose of existence. There is no doubt of the validity of the grant. There was no question of the man's right to give her the name; it passed without reproof, and was followed by a token of the Lord's approval and acceptance. The woman's first name—also given to her by her husband—signified her destination to be his wife, and therefore, as the context clearly shows, to be the mother of the whole human race. Had she received no other name, then, by what had occurred, she was mother rather of the dead than of the living, seeing that now death had passed upon all men. The new name could not signify the same thing over again. The living, of which she now became mother, could not be the whole human family, for of that she was mother before. There can be but one interpretation. The Lord's words make it plain. In the sentence upon Satan he said that a son born of or descended from the woman should break his power who by his device had brought death upon mankind. And of him, the woman's seed, which is Christ, the apostle said that he had abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. But the abolition of death means not that the body should not die, for that sentence is irreversible for all mankind, but that, for those who should repent, it would be annulled, and turned into a life which should never end. For, as our Lord said, he was

sent to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave to him, that is, to all who should obey him. Of all such, the woman, by virtue of her new name, became the mother, being the mother of him by whom they all live. We observe also that from this time a change is made in the man's name, but of this more in its proper place.

If, then, the Gospel be the root of Adam's prophecy; if Eve, from being mother of a dying race, became through her seed—Jesus that was to be—mother of a people who should live forever, she must herself have become partaker of that life through the grace of repentance. She must have renounced allegiance to Satan, and returned to God in sorrow for her sin. And the narrative shows not only that she did so but that it was the Lord himself who enabled her and made her willing. For, said he, in passing judgment upon her deceiver, "I WILL PUT enmity between thee and the woman." This is purely personal to the woman, what follows referring to her seed. Now this putting of enmity between Satan and the woman means the breaking up of the friendship which had been set up between them when she listened to his persuasion and did his will. It also implied that the bond still continued. Even then, while she was standing a culprit before the Lord, she was still Satan's liege. If left to herself, she must so continue. In the moment of remorse and dread she had confessed her sin, but now that she was respited she would, unless grace intervened, go back to it. The beauty, the glory, the delight, of the mysterious fruit with which Satan had filled her soul, would return when the fear of death had passed away. It is always so

with the sinner. To rupture the bond between Satan and the soul that sins, is the purpose of the Gospel. For so the Lord said in sending forth the preacher. It was "to open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light, and FROM THE POWER OF SATAN UNTO GOD." This was to be done in no other way than by the preaching of the word. In no other way, surely, did Jesus in the garden convert the woman from the error of her way; speaking to her as he ever spake on earth, persuading and convincing her by the power of truth. For then as now men must repent and turn willingly. Each must decide for himself, whether to accept the offer of grace, or to refuse it. The woman accepting it, the power of Satan over her came to an end, and her salvation was sealed by a new name (Is. 62: 2). This was indeed and in truth the beginning of the Gospel. It was co-eval with man's transgression. Here is the beginning of the constant teaching of scripture that salvation is of grace. It is the first open declaration thereof found in the scriptures. That, in the woman's case, grace came before repentance, and produced it, is plain from the words. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Had he not put it, it would not have been there. The words were fitly spoken to Satan, to show that great as was the power he had acquired over the woman's soul, his was greater, and that he should not be able to keep souls in bondage when he, the Son of God, should choose to deliver them.

Now we come to the last decisive phase of this earliest history of the operations of grace. That the man and the woman had repented; that they had renounced the devil's friendship, and accepted

the gift of eternal life; is plain from the man's exultant act. From the context it also appears that their repentance and restoration to favor took place while they were yet in their nakedness before the Lord. This, too, agrees with the scripture, which says, "God justifieth the ungodly," and "When I passed by thee and saw thee polluted—I said unto thee, LIVE; yea I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, LIVE." Then came the seal of their redemption. Their nakedness was clothed. Their shame was taken away. "Unto the man and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin and clothed them." We leave to the reader to trace the rich vein of doctrine figured in this act. We simply take it now as a sign of the Lord's pity in their immediate need and distress; so like him in the flesh, when he went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil. They must, indeed, abide the natural consequences of their transgression, as David did, and as all must do who sin, though forgiven; they must submit to the discipline of sorrow, conflict, and toil, till the end should come. But they would not now go forth in their nakedness and shame, but with the sweet consciousness that the very clothes which they wore, put on them by his loving, careful hands, were a pledge of his continued pity and support, whatever might befall.

THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SAVIOR'S GENEALOGY.

When Enos, third from Adam, inclusive, was born, the Savior's genealogy began to be written in

a book called the Book of the generations of Adam. At the head of the line is Adam, then Seth, then Enos, the succession continuing unbroken till the Savior appeared. There is a transcript of the list in the first book of Chronicles. Matthew quotes it in the beginning of his Gospel with the words here written, "The Book of the generation," substituting Jesus Christ for Adam. Writing for the Jews he goes no higher than David and Abraham, thus showing that Jesus was legal heir to David through Joseph, his reputed father. Luke gives the genealogy in another line, that of Mary, tracing the descent through David's son, Nathan, instead of Solomon, above which it coalesces with that quoted by Matthew, showing our Lord's descent from the woman, and from Adam, through the elect line of which Adam was the head.

The words accompanying the introduction of this book into the narrative are so remarkable that we will quote the passage.

"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created Adam, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

Observe first that the book is called the book of the generations of ADAM, and not of "the man," as he was constantly spoken of in the garden. Next, this is not a new or independent statement of the creation of man, but a reference, corresponding in every particular, to the account already given in the first chapter, which says that in creating Adam male and female, he gave them one name. "Let us make Adam in our image, in our likeness, and

let THEM have dominion." This shows that there is no difference between the man and the woman in their original, that is their spiritual, personality; but, as male and female, there is a difference, namely, of subordination. "He shall rule over thee." Thus, while the apostle teaches that the woman must be in subjection to the man, he also teaches, evidently with this passage in his mind, that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female. Adam, the natural head of the whole human family, is, in this book, separated from men, and placed at the head of a chosen line to end in Christ, who, being the chosen seed, and Adam's antitype, spoke of himself as the Son of man.

It will not, I hope, be deemed unimportant to enlarge somewhat on the difference made in this history between the spiritual and carnal in the creation of man. As they are distinct in their nature, so are they in their making. In the first chapter God created man in his own image. That is, Adam, a spirit, as God is a spirit. In the second, "he formed the man dust of the ground." That is, man in the body. Notice the elegance and appropriateness of this new word, "formed." Not made or created, which is general, but "formed," which is special. As a potter forms objects of clay, so the Lord God formed the man in his earthly part. The same term is used concerning the making of the beasts. This is only an *analogy*, and must be construed according to the nature of the subject. The notion that man was formed at once in complete manhood, with his parts pieced together, so that at one stage you might see a part of the man, and in due course the whole, is unnatural. As God is a

spirit he formed the body by spiritual operation and power. When Christ said, "A body hast thou prepared me," his body certainly was not formed in this manner. There are true science and spiritual insight in the description in Eccl. 11: 5: "As thou knowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." The bodies of all living creatures are formed by spiritual power, though we know not how it is done. For all power in nature is spiritual or immaterial. In this way we speak of natural forces. The power is not in the hammer which strikes a blow, nor in the arm that wields it. The power is not in the mountain slide. It is not in the plant which forces itself through the soil, nor in the tree which rears its massive bulk into the air. It is not in the infant when it takes on the human form in the mother's womb, nor in the man who walks and leaps and runs. As all move by a power which is not of themselves, and mature by a process which we call growth, we cannot err in ascribing both the power and the process to the formation of the first man. Whatever be the forces which come between, the scripture teaches that the power of God is outside all. Wherefore it says again, "In him we live and move and have our being." Though there was, of necessity, no parent, God, who made all things, is not subject to conditions. He who turned the rod into a serpent without the process of generation, and multiplied the loaves without the assistance of the plowman or the baker, may be credited with ability to mold the first man dust of the ground.

It may help to remove a difficulty, as well as to show the consistency of the narrative with itself in all its parts, if we observe further that the man was formed in his bodily part by the Lord God, that is, the Son of God, who, in the first chapter, was said to be only taken into Counsel in man's creation. That creation referred to his spirit, as made in the image of God. But in the making of his body, he returned to his original task, that of making all things by command. As he had formed every beast of the earth out of the ground, so he formed man, in his bodily part, out of the ground. Thus there were two distinct processes; but we need not therefore suppose an interval of time between them, any more than in the formation of the serpent out of the rod in Moses' hand. According to analogy, which, rightly used, is the most valuable attribute of science, the spirit of the beast must have been made first, then its sinuous body, but all in a moment of time. Or to take the greater example of God's work in the last day, when the bodies of all the saints will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; we see that we cannot understand the scriptures at all, nor reason upon them aright, unless we take it as their fundamental all-pervading truth that all things are possible with God. Although then there were two distinct processes in the making of men, they are not separate in time. That they are so in the narrative is most appropriate, seeing that the making of the body was the beginning of man's actual career on the earth.

EVANGELICAL WORSHIP INSTITUTED.

But not only was the settlement of the genealogy marked by its entry in a book, but there was made at the same time a change in worship. This is what we read. "Then"—when Enos, Seth's elect son, was born—"began calling upon the name of the Lord." It is evident that thus far God had continued to speak with men, as he had spoken with them in the garden, face to face. Thus he spoke with Cain. The time was now come when the righteous should walk by faith and not by sight: calling upon God as invisible but ever nigh. We say the righteous, for this is spoken not of mankind at large, but of the family which was separated from them. It is not easy to see why the revisers retained the word "men" in this passage. The literal translation is this: "Then was begun [Ges.] calling upon the name of Jehovah." "THEN"—the word is emphatic—when Enos was born, and the line settled preparatory to its being written in a book, the change was made.

There is evidently implied in this mode of worship the possession of a revelation which distinguished the chosen family from the outcast posterity of Cain. It was the formal beginning of the Church of God, whose distinctive character is the worship of Jehovah, or of the invisible God through Jehovah; a church, visibly organized, its headship, not the result of a human expedient, but of divine ordering. At first the temporal and the spiritual were indistinguishable by name. The head of the family was not always or necessarily the eldest; he might be deposed or superseded for misconduct, as in the

cases of Reuben and Esau. The rarity of such exceptions is a tacit proof that the heads of the elect line were, as a rule, godly men. When the chosen people became a nation, a distinction was made between the birthright line, implying temporal ascendancy, and the genealogy which was to end in Christ, the latter being limited to Judah, of whom it was said, "came the CHIEF RULER"; and it was expressly provided that the genealogy in this its evangelical sense was not to be "reckoned after the birthright."

I think it will be evident to the reader, first, that, seeing the essential importance of the settlement of this line to the excellence and purity of the church, the provision of a book that should obviate all dispute as to the succession was natural and necessary; and, secondly, that this early history is not a fragmentary, arbitrary, production, but a record of the divine care that all things should be so ordered as to keep alive in the minds of men the promise of a Redeemer who was in due time to appear.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

The order of inheritance and worship being thus settled, the separation, begun in the banishment of Cain, became something more than local. It was the separation of the church from the world. There was no visible barrier set up. Only faith and conscience keep the godly from falling. Intercourse with the world was not forbidden, only conformity to the world. Religion is of the will, and not of compulsion. This liberty was soon turned to licentiousness. Relations between the two divisions of mankind became more and more intimate, until at

length they issued in the closest of all ties. The "sons of God" intermarried with the "daughters of men"; the followers of Jehovah with the descendants of Cain. As strange interpretations have been made of this statement, let us observe that in scripture, people in the church are often spoken of as what they ought to be, rather than what they are. Thus our Lord, referring to the disobedient in Israel, spoke of them as still "children of the kingdom." That those faithless professors in the antediluvian world were still called the "sons of God," is proof that they still held their profession as followers of Jehovah. The descendants of Cain, with equal appropriateness were styled "daughters of men," seeing that they had no part in the inheritance, but were reckoned simply according to their natural descent.

Following one of the principles of interpretation—and they are not a few—laid down by the Apostles for the guidance of students of scripture, that "no prophecy of scripture is of private," or its own, "interpretation," we may, I think, be enabled to perceive that it is the purpose of this history to make plain how the family of Jehovahists—that is, the church—became worldly. When the apostle says "private interpretation," he certainly means that no scripture is to be restricted to its "own" literal sense and application. Though the letter has its "own" true meaning, there lies behind it some spiritual meaning, some divine purpose of deeper import. This rule, like many others, may be pushed to an unreasoning, not to say fanciful, extreme, which the expert student will wisely avoid. Now, when the Apostle Paul, quoted the law of Moses, as

saying, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox which treadeth out the corn," and added, "Doth God care for oxen," he assuredly did not mean to rob the precept of its "own" proper significance, as if God did not care for all the creatures which he had made, but that the precept, besides its "own" proper application, contained also a hidden reference to spiritual things; and these are ever the paramount consideration. Numerous other instances to the same effect, found in the apostle's writings, must be left to the reader's own research. What we are concerned with now is the application of the rule to the present history of the people's degeneration. I think the question here, too, may be asked, "doth God care" for the fading beauty of the maidens, the harps and organs of the musicians, the works of the artificers in brass and iron, and the luxuries of human abodes, spoken of the descendants of Cain? Does the Holy Spirit, in ordering the affairs of his eternal kingdom, descend to these earthly incidents, were it not to turn them to a spiritual purpose, and show how his people became ensnared to worldliness, drawn away and fascinated by the excellent superiority of the family of Cain in arts, accomplishments, luxury, and carnal beauty? Not for any evil in the things themselves, for Jesus was a carpenter, David a musician, Bezaleel and Aholiab inspired artificers; but evil in their tendency to supersede the Kingdom of God in men's affections; inciting to evil passions, provocative of contentions and violence, and so ending in that condition of ungodliness, in this narrative so forcibly described, which is unquestionably visible in all ages of the church, and in none more than in our own times.

The faith which alone kept any faithful and true—and that period is not devoid of bright examples—became well-nigh extinct, even as our Lord intimated that it would become all but extinct in the latter days. It were instructive to pursue the parallel. No miracle or sign from heaven, no fresh revelation, was given then any more than now, while then even as now, the spirit of God strove with men ready to help the sincere to a godly life. The saved were saved not by the church but by their faith. The church, in its visible form, had become, as now, to an almost universal extent indistinguishable from the world, a barren formal worship without effect upon the life alone remaining, the sons of God having, indeed, a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Their defection was not from ordinances, but from godliness, and is thus summed up: "All flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth."

THE FLOOD.

To this state of corruption our Lord referred when he said, "The flood came and took them all away." Two questions arise here. Did judgment come upon them without warning and opportunity of repentance? If they repented did they all perish?

We naturally refer to the interpretation of the apostle Peter, who writes much of the flood in both his epistles.

It is important to observe here that both our Lord and his apostles spoke not only as preachers, but as interpreters. They not only spoke the word, but showed its meaning. Thus Jesus, in answer to

doubters, did not arbitrarily declare that the dead would rise, but showed it to be the teaching of the scriptures that they must rise. So we must understand the apostle's statements in this passage, not as arbitrarily made, but as just inferences from the narrative itself. To the narrative therefore we must have recourse if we would understand the writer's meaning. When, for instance, the apostle refers to Noah as a preacher of righteousness, we must understand him as inferring this from the narrative itself. And I think we find this to be the case. This is what we read. "The Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man for that he is also flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." The natural implication is that though "not always," yet for this period, he would strive with them: and so give them opportunity for repentance.

Now the spirit strives with men by his *word*, and if God strove with the antediluvians by his word, there must have been one to declare it; as the apostle said concerning the world at large; "How shall they hear without a preacher?" And who should the preacher be in the present case but Noah, to whom God said, "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Noah was a prophet, and the spirit of God spoke by the prophets. God revealed to Noah all that he purposed to do, and gave him command as to what he himself should do to keep alive a remnant. If then there was a preacher, as of necessity there must have been, it could be none other than Noah. It follows, then, that for the space of one hundred and twenty years men, through his preaching, had opportunity of

repentance. And with this the apostle's words agree when he said that "the long-suffering of God WAITED in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing." Now that what God waited for was man's repentance, is also the apostle's interpretation. For, afterwards, referring to this very example, he adds this reflection: "God is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." We may be sure then that Noah did not preach in vain.

And now, I think, the apostle's statement that Christ by his spirit went and preached to the antediluvians is also according to the narrative: which implies that it was by his *spirit* that Jehovah strove with the disobedient in the days of Noah. All true preaching of the word is by the spirit of Christ. "He that heareth you heareth me." "I will give you a mouth and a wisdom," which none shall be able to resist. And Paul said to some who doubted his apostolic authority, "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me"; and as Jesus said, "I am he who am speaking to you, from the beginning." It was, then, Christ in the spirit who preached to the disobedient by the mouth of Noah.

But, says the apostle, it was to the "spirits in prison" that he preached. The expression is peculiar, but so were the circumstances. A man, unconscious of the judgment of law, follows his evil ways freely; but not so when he knows that judgment is pronounced upon him. Thus our Lord said of the Jews, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." So, until judgment was declared, the men before the flood followed their evil ways

freely, and with no other restraint but conscience; but afterwards, when judgment was pronounced upon them, they were as men in prison, under sentence of death, from which there was no escape. Most truly and literally then did Christ preach to them as to men in prison.

But further. If we consider that the salvation which Noah preached was not salvation from the flood but from the wrath of God, the saying that he preached to their spirits becomes very significant. It is as true now as it was then. The preaching of the Gospel is not salvation from death, in whatever form it may come, for it is appointed unto all men once to die and after this the judgment; of which death is but the premonition. That which comes after death is "the wrath of God against every soul of man that doeth evil." The preaching of Noah, then, was not an appeal to men's earthly minds to escape death, but to their spirits within to flee from the wrath to come. This is no strange notion. For there is nothing that men will not do when this terror seizes upon their spirits, no sacrifice that they will not make, to propitiate the Deity, and insure themselves against his wrath in the state which comes after death. Thus the apostle, wishing to awaken this dread by a severe sentence on some who were disobedient, said that this was done that their "SPIRIT might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

We conclude, then, that in the apostle's view the preaching of Noah was not in vain. Obeying God in the spirit, men live though they die. We always think thus when great calamities overtake men in common, whether by land or sea, in peace or in

war. Josiah died in peace with God, for so had God promised, yet he was brought home a bleeding corpse. The manner or time of death is of little account; to be at peace with God is everything, whether in life or death. And to this agree the words of the apostle when, summing up the long-suffering of God in waiting for men's repentance before the flood, he added, "For this cause was the Gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Although they perished by the same judgment which fell upon the ungodly as to their bodies, yet repenting, they, as to their spirits, lived forever.

TYPE OF THE JUDGMENT TO COME.

The reader will scarcely need to be reminded of the truth (that the flood was a type or forecast of the judgment to come upon all mankind.) As judgment was first proclaimed, then mercy, so was it in the days of Christ. First, John came warning men to flee from the wrath to come, for that the Judge would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Then Jesus came preaching mercy, exhorting and commanding men to repent and believe the Gospel. And as in the preaching of Noah, so in the preaching of Christ, the condition of the world was changed. When the judgment of the last day was proclaimed, men became accountable to God in a way they had not been accountable before. The apostle makes this very plain. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent; because he hath

appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." All who have heard the Gospel are in this condition. The word of the Lord confirms it. "He that believeth not is condemned already," and why? "BECAUSE he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," though it has been preached to him. To prisoners of judgment—that is all who have heard and not obeyed—mercy is still proclaimed. The spirit strives with them through the word preached, urging them to embrace the proffered mercy. As with the antediluvians, so with the world at large, the long-suffering of God waits to give them opportunity of repentance. How long he will wait is not revealed. The day is fixed, but it is always true, as the apostle says, that he is READY to judge the living and the dead. As the flood came at last, so will the great and terrible day of the Lord. The flood came only upon the world of the ungodly, but the heavens and the earth, which are now will be consumed in the final conflagration. The apostle who declares this is careful to say that all is according to the word of the Lord. The word which declared the flood by the mouth of Noah, the same word declares the destruction of the world by the mouth of Jesus and his apostles. And heaven and earth shall pass away, said the Lord, but my words shall not pass away. Observe the unity of the scriptures. One thing from the beginning to the end. Even to bring men back to God. Jesus gave himself for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. One thing also in this, that there is a day of

judgment and perdition for those who obey not the Gospel. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

When Noah and his family came out of the ark, it was a new departure for the family of mankind. The world began again with eight persons. This one family, from which the multitudes that now inhabit the earth derive their existence, began their new life under favorable auspices, with every motive of fear and love to urge them to a better course. They all knew God. They had seen his wrath and were spared. They had lived through the period while the ark was preparing. They had heard their father's preaching, warning mankind of the impending judgment. They had had the benefit of his example, his upright life, his communion with God. When they came forth from the gloom of the ark into the light of day again, the hour of deliverance was to them an hour of gratitude and praise. The solemn sacrifice was as the preaching of the Gospel. The Lord smelled a sweet savor; the savor of a sacrifice better than the blood of bulls and goats. His promise, symbolized by the bow in the cloud, was as replete with hope, as the flood had been of terror and awe. Should a cloud obscure their light, it should be to them a reminder that he would not leave them nor forsake them. "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."

Thus was man again put upon his probation, to see what was in his heart, whether, after instructions, warnings, and encouragements, so plentifully vouchsafed, he would now fear God, or go on his

wilful way as his fathers had done. A more hopeful method of testing the power of human nature to do well cannot be conceived. If the old world's departure from righteousness had proceeded from unhappy influences of bad example, and not from innate corruption, they had now the most favorable opportunity of proving it by a better life. The probation was not for God's information, but for man's conviction. (For when God promised not to destroy them again with a flood, he at the same time declared that his forbearance would not cure their disobedience, for that the imagination of man's heart was evil from his youth.)

PARTITION OF THE EARTH.

The building of the tower of Babel, with its consequences was evidently to the historian—Moses, as we hope to show by and by—who wrote after the land of Canaan and other parts of the earth were settled by the descendants of Noah, an event of so much importance that he prefaces the brief contemporary chronicle which narrates it with a synopsis very needful to its understanding. Gen. x. He shows how the earth was divided after the flood among the families of Noah's sons, of whose descendants, in the general sense, he gives a comprehensive account. He makes particular mention of Nimrod, of the family of Ham, the founder of Babylon, who, notwithstanding the check which the confusion of tongues imposed on his ambitious designs, eventually succeeded in establishing a powerful kingdom.

He makes a remarkably suggestive statement con-

cerning Shem, who succeeded Noah as head of the Jehovah line. He calls him the "father of all the children of Eber." Looking to the genealogy, we find that Eber was fourth (inclusive) in descent from Shem. Shem had several other sons besides Arphaxad, from whom Eber descended, but of none of them is he called the father. The statement is precisely similar to that which was made concerning the "generations of Adam." Adam had other sons, but he was father to none of them but to the descendants of Seth. It is important to notice this feature in the genealogical record. The line which was to terminate in the promised Deliverer was always kept distinct from the world. There must, then, be something very notable in Eber's personality, as known to the future historian, that he should become in his own person the head, or forerunner, of an elect posterity, known afterwards as Eberites or Hebrews, not as interrupting the line, but as imparting to it a new character of development. And let it be observed, that development is the character of God's dealings with men from Adam to Christ. While in the genealogy, supplied by the contemporary chronicle, nothing is said of Eber more than of the others, the historian adds this important fact. "Unto Eber," he says, "were born two sons; the name of one was Peleg (division) for in his days the earth was divided, and the name of the other was Joktan." Here, then, is a notable fact recorded of Eber, namely, that he commemorated the partition of the earth by naming his son after that event. The just inference is that he took a conspicuous part in that transaction. In purely secular history this

would surely be accepted as a matter of course. From the chronicles we may infer that it was a just and honorable and godly part that he took therein, a part worthy of the followers of Jehovah, of whom he was head. Shem was a man of singularly pure character; he earned his father's blessing by his conduct on a particular occasion, while, on the other hand, Ham earned his curse. This is what the chronicle says of the prophetic words of Noah. 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.'" Canaan was the son of Ham; and the severity of the sentence which Noah passed on his younger son is more deeply marked by transferring it to his posterity, through Canaan, who, according to all subsequent history, exceeded their progenitor in vileness. But to apply both the chronicle and the history to Eber. Shem, inheritor of his father's blessing and successor to the headship, adopted Eber and his descendants as his own children, and set his seal to their inheritance of the blessing. If, as is not improbable, he lived to be contemporary with Eber, it might well be that in the part which he took in the division of the earth, Eber had the advantage of the counsel of his godly progenitor. And if Shem, while still living, adopted Eber's children, it would be analogous to Jacob's adopting the sons of Joseph. And when Noah prophesied concerning Japheth, that he should dwell in the tents of Shem, the idea of some that he at the same time instructed Shem concerning the ultimate division of

the earth, may not be altogether groundless. However this may be, the adoption of Eber's descendants by Shem is far-reaching. Abraham was one of these, and future chroniclers are not unmindful of the fact, making outsiders speak of Abraham as the Hebrew or Eberite, head of a religious family, on which Eber, by his conduct on a memorable occasion, had conferred renown. Isaac and Jacob also, and their descendants after the flesh, in short, the whole nation of Israel, were Hebrews to the end. But in Abraham there was a new departure. In him all families of the earth were to be blessed. By virtue of this promise he supplanted Eber. And if, in a later prophecy, we read correctly concerning Eber that he also should "perish forever," we only see what was in fact true concerning his posterity after the flesh. Thus we see ever two lines of descent, one after the flesh, one after the spirit. Two lines from Adam. Two lines from Shem. Two lines from Abraham.

DEFECTION OF THE HAMITES AND BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

To return to Eber and his share in the partition of the earth. To have the subject fully before us we will quote the contemporary chronicle.

"And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and

slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

It might seem from a superficial glance at this account, taken by itself, that the whole human family, journeying together, were alike implicated in the impious design here narrated, namely the building of a tower to rival heaven. A closer view, —taking it in connection with the preceding comments of the historian who transcribed it,—will, I think, render this interpretation inadmissible, and show, what is very frequent in scripture, that the subject of the first statement, "the whole earth," is not the subject of the second, the builders of the tower. There is a gap between, and how to fill it must be determined by consideration of all the circumstances.

From the nature of the case it is not probable that the three families, with all the earth to choose from,

would keep together long; certainly not for a period of probably hardly less than four hundred years; while each family would in the main, for safety and convenience, deem it prudent to avoid scattering. The avowed purpose of the builders to make themselves a name, would have little significance if the whole race were concerned in the design, for who then would there be to admire their renown? But such a purpose would well agree with the character of Nimrod, leader of the tribe of Ham, if, from any cause, he were jealous of the other families, or desired to attain supremacy over them. It is a matter of prime concern with characters of this sort to keep their forces united, to recall wanderers, to be always on the alert. The chronicle implies this care on the part of the builders in the clearest manner. Its language has no significance except as it implies the presence of another body which was certain to withstand their unfair pretensions and ambitious designs. What so likely to secure the ascendancy they aimed at as to gather their forces within the walls of a city—no novel device, as the well-known history of Cain would show—and to build a tower whose grandeur would overawe their opponents. Within these walls let all be gathered. Let stragglers be recalled; let adherents be enticed, and let all risk of a dispersion of force be avoided. This well agrees with the character of Nimrod, and his subsequent career, and with the figurative term by which he is characterized—"a mighty hunter before the Lord." He was too busy with his schemes of ambition to hunt wild beasts, a conception altogether foreign to the history. But that he was a hunter of men, is beyond all contradiction.

Assuming the accuracy of this conclusion, the question arises when did the Hamites, under their enterprising leader, inaugurate this device? I think we have ample materials to fill up the gap which the chronicle leaves. Much must have taken place before this spirit of domination came to a head. The clear implication that Eber took a leading part in the "division of the earth" suggests the circumstances which must have necessitated such a transaction. The need of a common agreement as to ranges for the several families, must soon have become apparent. Looking to the case of Abraham and Lot, and the general course of human affairs in analogous circumstances, it was natural, and even inevitable, that strifes would arise among them concerning favorable ranges of pasture or tracts for settlement, just as, in our day, strifes and jealousies arise in regard to what are called spheres of influence, where mercantile interests or colonial enterprise is concerned. Nothing more likely than that, in view of these dissensions, a family meeting or convention should be held to bring such disputes to an amicable termination. The proposal would naturally come from Eber, just as in later times a similar proposal came from Abraham. Nowhere in the previous history of the followers of Jehovah do we see signs of ambition among them after world power. From what has been said of the character of Shem and his posterity in the elect line, we cannot conceive their taking part in a scheme so impious as that which occurred in the plain of Shinar, while to seek by a family conference to put a peaceful end to all dissensions is what might be justly expected of them. That any conference to

this end should fall into two parts is according to all history. There are generally the peace-loving and the ambitious; some greedy and grasping and over-reaching, and others resisting unjust and unfair pretensions. The world is full of such experiences. In the partition of the earth, then, the main contracting parties would be the family of Ham and their adherents on the one side, and the family of Shem and worshipers of Jehovah and their adherents on the other. The case is precisely analogous to the condition of the human family after Cain went forth. There was a clear line of distinction between the sons of God and the daughters of men; a line not soon obliterated. The climax of wickedness in that case was not reached till the lapse of five times the period which lay between the flood and the dispersion. There is no sign that the followers of Jehovah in the latter short period of time had become so corrupted as to join in any scheme to defy heaven and Jehovah, whose name was their hope and trust.

The family of Shem, moreover, would be strengthened by the family of Japheth. We can conceive no time more likely for the fulfilment of Noah's prophecy that Japheth should dwell in the tents of Shem. Thus fortified with the aid of the godly and well disposed, the family of Shem, under Eber's conduct, might be well able to countervail the designs of the grasping and ambitious Hamites to get more than their share of the vast estate. The division of the earth among rival claimants has a great and pretentious sound, but in this case only in seeming; for in fact the whole earth was waiting to be peopled, and there were only these three fami-

lies to people it. When the partition of a particular district or estate is in question, as in the case of Abraham and Lot, or Mephibosheth and Ziba, it is the land that is divided. Now it is the whole earth. The power of the original decree, subjugating the earth to man, was vested in these three families, and there was none to dispute their right. It only remained that they should agree among themselves on a just apportionment.

If the Hamite section, under Nimrod, were discontented with the result of the conference,—and the ambitious are never contented with less than all or the best,—we can see that the statement that the whole earth was of one language and one speech must be kept distinct from the statement which relates to the building of the tower. The unity of speech was a circumstance favorable to a family conference, and therefore a natural preface to the account. A common decision having been arrived at, and the conference broken up, the families would go their several ways. And it is just here that the chronicle takes up the record, and concentrates itself on the doings of the discontented family of Ham. "As they journeyed from the East they found a plain in the land of Shinar." We believe that the reading of the Old Version, "from the East" is the proper reading in this connection. When two readings of equal authority in the abstract are in question, that must be chosen which agrees with the circumstances of the case. As yet this region, the plain of Shinar, had not been reached by any of the families. The conference, we may reasonably suppose, took place to the East of it, in the region which eventually fell to the descendants of

Shem. There is a general consent as to the main outline of the partition, in which the west and south, or rather the southwest was assigned to Ham. When, therefore, this family went forth to work out their destiny, and reached the plain of Shinar, finding it a most desirable place of settlement, though it was not in their right, there they made a stand, and under the mighty conduct of Nimrod, and disregarding the family compact, they determined to strike a blow not only for independence, but for supremacy. The unity of speech which favored a common agreement, would equally favor a design of conquest. If it had continued, that design might have succeeded. The grandeur of the conception, and the excitement of new and stirring adventures, would attract many of the godless sort, and might even seduce some from the ranks of Shem. Few, unless strongly principled with godly fear, can resist the attractions of wealth and renown and bold enterprise. Even as it was, and notwithstanding the check from heaven, Nimrod succeeded in establishing a powerful kingdom, though falling short of universal dominion. Perhaps to the period after the dispersion, when Nimrod, shorn of some of his power, still pursued his design, we may assign the expedition of Asshur. Asshur was a son of Shem, but there had been time for his family to become powerful. Whatever may have been the cause of his going over to Nimrod, we may take his name in the ethnical sense when it is said that "out of that land went forth Asshur and built Nineveh." The motive may well have been discontent, coupled with consciousness of fitness to conquer and rule. Whatever may have been the cause of this expedition, it

is not easy to see why our revisers prefer to change the old version, and to assume the existence of an Assyria, before and apart from the building of Nineveh. The distinction between the city of Nineveh, founded by Asshur, and the city of Babylon, Nimrod's capital, is marked in the historian's summary, and distinctly expressed in the later age of the prophet Micah, who says of a coming deliverer and his train, "They shall waste the land of Asshur with the sword, AND the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof."

ORIGIN OF KINGLY GOVERNMENT.

The institution of government by kings, immediately consequent upon the confusion of tongues, is proof that in judgment God remembered mercy. The world, taking up a new life under new conditions, was not left without help and guidance.

With the exception of what we gather from the genealogy and Moses' comments thereon in Gen. 10, there is no record of human affairs from the time of the dispersion to the days of Abraham. Abraham was seventh (inclusive) from Eber, in whose days the earth was divided, and the speech of men confounded. Yet during that brief period the method of government by kings had generally obtained. No less than ten kings are named in connection with Abraham's life. So suddenly do they appear, that it was as if they had sprung out of the earth. Yet there is evidently a history behind them. Though it has never been written, we may be permitted, as in all other cases, to consider what light the circumstances may throw upon this remark-

able change. In estimating the significance of any office or function, we naturally have recourse to the name by which it is designated. If we do this in the present case we find that the quality of *counsel* is involved in the name and office of kings. This is very significant, and will, I think, be found in harmony with the course which must have been taken by the various bodies—nations they were called—into which, through the confusion of tongues, the human family was of necessity divided. Each body, no longer under patriarchal rule, and consequently devoid of any recognized authority, would be swayed solely by regard to separate and individual interests; every man for himself; every family for itself; selfish contentions for the best pastures, fountains, and streams. Looking to the almost universal conduct of men under such circumstances, we are assured that this state of things would not last long. Those who spake one language would come together. Some wiser than the rest—so it always happens—would urge upon their companions how necessary it was to their safety to be united. The obvious and natural result would be the choice of a head. If language had failed, memory would survive. If, as we have endeavored to show, the partition of the earth was the outcome of a family council, the memory of this would furnish a precedent. Let us do as our fathers did. Let us take counsel together and consider what is best to be done. If this be in harmony with the natural course of human affairs, we can see how the new mode of government acquired its name.

I think we can see also that this method of rule—counsel for the common good—was better than the

old, namely the patriarchal, which gave free scope to despotic rule. If we take the case of any nation in our own day, where all, in the main, speak one language, and call their ruler father, thus approximating to the antediluvian mode of rule, we can easily perceive what an abatement of power and check to ambitious designs would ensue were this nation suddenly to find itself divided into ten bodies, speaking different languages. It is no disparagement to the superiority of the new mode of government that its working has not been perfect, and that the rule conferred by all on one, grew into heritages, heritages into dynasties, dynasties into despotisms, for there is nothing so good but the pride and wickedness of man will turn it to evil. Even as early as Abraham we may see in "Tidal King of Nations" the struggle after world power in the exercise of this method of rule. We only say that its tendency is good, and that, with all its drawbacks, its operation has been better for mankind than the patriarchal mode. The newborn *nation*—the term for the people, like that for the ruler, being also new—thus knit together under one head, would be free to expand, and better able to hold its own. Separate governments created separate interests. The virtues of industry, temperance, and valor, would be cultivated as needful to their prosperity and under the stimulus of adventure the earth would be more speedily settled. And though some of the rulers of men abused their delegated authority, constant checks and limitations through popular discontent would remind them that not their will, but the welfare of the people, was the supreme consideration. Few were so devoid of a sense of

their responsibilities as not to dread, and, in greater or less degree, seek to disarm, popular resentment. Something of counsel entered into all their plans. There are in every kingdom or nation magistrates, and courts of justice, for settlement of disputes, and redress of wrongs, so that an apostle declared that the ruler was even the minister of God himself, for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well.

THE DIVINE WILL THAT NATIONS SHOULD BE FREE.

If, then, this view of the origin of kingly government be correct, namely, that it was the expression of the popular will and of the right of the people to take counsel on and to regulate their own affairs, and if also it be true that it was under divine prompting and direction that this was brought about, it follows that it is the will of God that nations should enjoy the inestimable benefits of freedom. They have often achieved this right, and consigned to nothingness the empty claim of mortal men of a divine indefeasible right to rule their fellows. There is nothing essentially inimical to true freedom in heritages and dynasties, if the right of the people to set them aside for misconduct, and to have a voice in the enactment of laws for their good, be not impugned. A singular spectacle is afforded in our own day of a nation, in the very van-guard of the free, retaining at its head, and rejoicing and glorying in the fact, a ruler in whom, along with personal fitness to rule, is centered all the prestige of dynasty and heritage. Looking at

the diverse sentiments which contend in the bosom of this great people, it is difficult to estimate the beneficial effect of the harmonious working of these two apparently inconsistent elements, assuring the invincible progress of freedom on the one hand, and, on the other, creating a balancing power, which tends to preserve it from anarchy and wildness. Nor does it affect the principle that in some nations the name has been changed from king to some other appellation. It is a very common case, where a function has become odious through long abuse, that the very name is also changed, when the function is restored to its proper exercise, and it is well that it should be so. The retention of the name might, through the force of long-continued associations, bring back corruption of the function. No sacrifice of principle is involved, while the thing denoted remains the same. From the above considerations we may draw this conclusion, that government by kings was the first expression of human freedom; and the emancipation of mankind from that arbitrary and despotic rule which was an essential element of a purely patriarchal government.

But the above account, if reasonable, of the origin of kingly rule from the human point of view, does not of itself sufficiently explain its swift and general adoption by the newly-formed nations, both as to the name and function. It will, I think, be found in harmony with the circumstances of the case, as well as with the scriptures at large, that God, who had brought men into this new and difficult crisis of affairs by the confusion of their speech, failed not to assist them to a favorable beginning of their

new career. There are many signs that the knowledge of God did not become extinct at this juncture, or that all communication between God and the newly-formed nations was at once cut off. In Abraham's day there was a king of Salem, who was also priest of the Most High God. God spoke in a dream to Abimelech, king of Gerar, who also answered him by a name first begun to be used in Abraham's time. The light which had descended through the patriarch, Noah, was not quenched all at once. And this agrees with the words of the apostle, who, assuming its early existence, said of men that "when they knew God they glorified him not as God, but because vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Declension from the light was gradual. We are speaking from the scriptural standpoint when we affirm that God was with the nations at this parting of the ways, and that, as the judgment was supernatural, so also were the help and benefit.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ANTEDILUVIAN WORLD AND THE NATIONS IN THE LAST DAY.

The distribution of mankind into separate nationalities is expressly attributed to God in the scriptures. "All NATIONS whom thou hast made," said the Psalmist, and this is a special statement, different from the general statement that ALL MEN are the work of his hands. To the same effect are the words of Moses: "When the Most High divided to the nations"—using the new word—"their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam"—the

elect line—"he set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the Children of Israel." We must always, in reading the scriptures, look for a reason why one word in a particular statement is preferred before another. It is noteworthy that our Lord, speaking of his coming as the Son of man in the last day, said, "Before him shall be gathered all NATIONS"—not all mankind. There must be a reason for this. We must beware of fanciful interpretations, but we may not lightly pass over things that differ. Every word from the mouth of kings is weighed. If, then, the judgment of the flood was final and universal, so far as the old world was concerned,—and this seems to be the force of the word (1 Pet. 3) "once" in A. V. (discarded in R. V.) signifying not once upon a time, but once for all—and if our Lord declares the judgment in the last day as coming upon the NATIONS, and the old world was not a nation, but a rebellious family, then, while we have no right to draw absolute conclusions, we may meditate on the awful thought that the judgment of the antediluvians is past and done with, and that they are already in the state to which the nations will be consigned in the last day. For the teaching of the scripture is plain as to the truth that a lower depth is reserved for those who will be sentenced in the day of judgment, than that to which they descend when in the hour of dissolution, they enter the state intermediate between death and the resurrection of the dead.

The confusion of tongues, then, was not an isolated wonder, or an arbitrary chastisement, but a means to a beneficial end. It effected an improvement on the previous order to things under which

the earth had become so utterly corrupt. And, indeed, all providential checks are either remedial or precautionary. Every change is intended for betterment, and especially for the restraint of human ambition and rebuke of man's ungodliness.

According to the teaching of scripture, the order of kingly government was in the divine counsels before it obtained on earth. It was instituted among men for their trial, first, among the nations at large, then, under the immediate direction of the Lord, in Israel. All alike failed in producing a perfectly righteous rule. The issue was the exaltation of the only perfectly righteous man, the Son of God, to the throne of universal dominion, called the Kingdom of God. Under his rule freedom began indeed; even "the glorious liberty of the Sons of God." For, "if the Son shall make you free, then are ye free indeed."

THE GOSPEL. PREACHED TO ABRAHAM.

When, after the confusion of tongues, the newly formed nations began to spread abroad over the earth, the followers of Jehovah, whose worship began with the settlement of the genealogy, kept themselves a distinct family under patriarchal rule. In the call of Abraham, God's displeasure against the nations began to appear, and his purpose to form a new nation, distinct and separate from the rest, was declared. In Abraham, also, the Gospel came into view, as a bright light shining from afar, and the blessing, hitherto confined to one family, was, in his seed, to be extended to all the earth. The promise took immediate effect upon himself, and

Abraham stands conspicuous as the first believer in the Gospel, father of the faithful, accepted, as every soul of man must be accepted, for his faith alone. Abraham "believed in Jehovah, and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Now, when the apostle said that the Gospel was preached before unto Abraham, it may be asked whether he knew this by direct revelation, or whether he gathered it from the scriptures. Believing that it was a rule with our Lord and the apostles to show to believers the way of interpreting the scriptures for themselves, we take the statement in the latter sense, namely, as an interpretation, and therefore capable of verification; and our inquiry will be whether we can discern in the narrative the grounds on which it rests.

As so many points of contact with Gospel truth are contained in Abraham's history, we will limit ourselves to one—THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC. And this is the apostle's interpretation thereof (Heb. 11): "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." And this is how the apostle interprets Abraham's act and thought. First, that though the act was not, in the issue, accomplished, Abraham undoubtedly intended to sacrifice his son without any thought to the contrary. This is so plain from the history that it needs no further remark. Secondly, that Abraham expected that God would raise him from the dead. As the history does not state this, we

have to inquire whether its tenor warrants such an interpretation. We believe that it does. We read that Abraham, proceeding alone with Isaac to the place of sacrifice, said to his servants, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and will come again to you." (A. V.) In the Revised Version, the words, "we will," are rightly added to the word worship," and if the same words were added, as the original requires, to the last clause also, the statement would be emphatic indeed. It would read thus: "I and the lad will go yonder, and we will worship, and WE WILL COME AGAIN to you." I believe we have here the ground of the apostle's interpretation. If Abraham said this to the servants in simple truth, his thought plainly was that, after slaying his son, he would return with him alive. There is but one possible interpretation of this thought, namely, that he expected that God would raise him from the dead. By no other means could he return with him alive. It is just here that the apostle's statement that the Gospel had been preached to Abraham, becomes a necessity to the interpretation. Only by revelation of the Gospel, of which the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead is the central truth, could the resurrection of Isaac have occurred to Abraham's mind. That God should have made such a revelation before he required Abraham to sacrifice his son was but according to his goodness, and, indeed, his promise. Abraham was a prophet, and we read (Am. 3), "Surely the Lord God will DO NOTHING but he revealeth his secret unto his servants, the prophets." If, then, God had revealed to Abraham that he would raise up his own son Jesus from the

dead, he, Abraham, would justly reason that he was able also to raise up Isaac. And if he was able, he would also do it, for how otherwise could the promise of a great nation to be born of Isaac be fulfilled?

Abraham's temptation, then, was not an arbitrary test how far he would go in blind obedience, but the trial of a mind spiritually enlightened to know and do the will of God.

But we must go further, and say that the revelation was not limited to the one fact of the resurrection of the Son of God, but comprehended all the great and blessed consequences of that event. This was our Lord's interpretation. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." Doubtless he saw it in a vision. For thus we read (Gen. 15), "The word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision." Preaching is one way in which the word comes. "Preach the word." So Peter (Ac. 10), "The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; he is Lord of all." If, then, by the word of the Lord, Abraham in a vision saw Christ's day, as Isaiah, Daniel and John saw it, then was the Gospel made known to him in all its fulness. He "*saw*" (in a vision) Christ's glory; saw him sitting upon his throne; his messengers going into all the world, according to promise, proclaiming the great sacrifice; the elect of all nations entering into his kingdom by faith; the dead, small and great, standing before God; and the resurrection to eternal life of all obedient souls. With a mind full of these wonders of divine power and goodness, he would count the resurrection of his son a certain thing rather than that all God's promises should fail.

And if these things were revealed to Abraham before he went forth to sacrifice his son,—and I think this may be the force of the apostle's words, "preached BEFORE, the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed," which words, and also the word which came to him in a vision, were spoken to him before he was bidden to offer up his son,—if he saw that he was to take part in the work of the world's redemption; and that, by the sacrifice of his son, he was to set forth, as in a figure, the sacrifice of the Son of God himself; then would he glory in the thought that he was counted worthy to suffer, and be associated with God himself, in this act of love and mercy. He knew what he was doing and expecting when he said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering"; not a ram, caught in a thicket by the horns, but the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. When his trial was ended and he found that, after all, One only was to suffer for sin, the Just for the unjust, his joy found utterance in the triumphant exclamation, Jehovah-jireh, The Lord will provide. And thus, I conceive, did he rejoice to see the Lord's day, and, seeing it, was glad.

But our conception of Abraham's act is not complete unless we consider also the spirit in which he did it. It was not only because, through the revelation made to him, he saw himself associated with God in his purpose of mercy and love, but because he had a heart corresponding thereunto. When the heart is fully engaged on any object, what sacrifices are not men willing to make for the accomplishment of their desires. If there are parents who will gladly send forth their sons to die for their country;

if they esteem their country above their family; how much more Abraham, when he saw the salvation of the world at stake. This argument does not appeal to sense but to reason. For of this kind are martyrs, who counted not their lives dear to them, so that they might help forward the work of redeeming love towards mankind. Think what God called them to endure, what they were willing to endure, rather than deny the truth of his salvation. They endured because, like Abraham, they believed. And truly Abraham was a martyr, the first who consciously made himself a martyr for the Gospel's sake. If we need any proof of his love to mankind, let us remember how he agonized in prayer for Sodom, when God made known to him that it was to be destroyed by fire from heaven. Can we doubt that he would have been willing even to die that that one city might be saved? How much more for a whole world, when, in his vision of the day of the Lord, its impending doom was set before his eyes, as reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. To save men from this perdition, God gave his Son, and, in the same spirit of pity and love, Abraham was willing to follow that divine example.

We have here, moreover, a signal proof that the fathers did not look only for temporal promises, but, as the apostle says, "they looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." They all knew that their Messiah must suffer and die, and be raised from the dead, before they could enter into life and glory. And the apostle says again, speaking of the men who wrought wonderful things through their belief in the word of promise,

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having SEEN them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK OF MOSES.

In the history of God's dealings with Abraham we can hardly fail to see that in him the revelation of grace and mercy reached a new point of departure. In this he was different from the fathers. To none of them was formally made known the truth that for justification before God a man's faith is counted to him for righteousness; that one man must die for the sin of the world; that in him and in his seed should all families of the earth be blessed; in which truths the Gospel consists, and by them it was made known to Abraham. What more required to be done? The way of justification being revealed, and the sacrifice, prefigured in Isaac, accepted, salvation might now surely be published through all the earth. Instead of this, there was a pause; a long night; and then a dispensation to illustrate, by special arrangements of a wonderful character, the need, nature, and personality, of a Redeemer, and of a Mediator between God and man. Abraham, in whom the light of the Gospel so clearly appeared, was to stand aside for a time, and give place to a prophet by whose ministry those preparatory wonders were to be shown, after which the broken thread would be reunited, and Abraham's seed be continued through all generations. That prophet was Moses; Moses, in and by whom the

truth of the past was confirmed, and the grace of the future assured. The reader will, therefore, I trust, bear with a somewhat extended consideration of what is written concerning this prophet and his work.

Our Lord's answer to the question of his Jewish adversaries raised the further question of the authority on which they should believe on himself as speaking to them from the beginning; for nowhere in the scriptures are men required to receive the word of God except on reasonable grounds of belief. Jesus was a man in no wise different from the rest of men, except that he was more holily human. He gave his hearers to understand that his mere ipse dixit would go for nothing were it not confirmed on sufficient evidence. He had already indicated the authority on which they should believe on him. It was the authority of the scriptures. "Search the scriptures," he had said, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they be they which testify of me." He further limited them to the writings of Moses as specially confirming his associations. For, said he, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for HE WROTE OF ME. But if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?" In referring them to Moses he emphasized his reference to the beginning, for Moses is the sole authority for all that took place in the garden, and in the succeeding ages to his own time. There is a pertinency in his answer to the Jews' question in that it identified them with all the past. For, as we shall notice more particularly afterwards, He who spake first to man in the garden, continued to speak in all following ages,

not to the world at large, but to a people chosen out of the world: The succession was unbroken, so that the origin of the nation of Israel, including the Jews, could be traced up to the very beginning as the adopted children of God and as one people. Our Lord's words, then, were singularly pertinent to this truth. "I am he who am speaking to you from the beginning." The reader will remember other occasions when our Lord identified the Jews with their fathers.

What we are now concerned with is the authority of Moses for what took place from the beginning. It is necessary to bear in mind the difference in the mental state of men in our day from that of the Jews when our Lord spoke to them. The Jews never denied the authority of Moses. Our Lord's rebuke was that while they revered him as their lawgiver, and threatened death to any who would dispute his authority, they did not obey him. But as there are some in our day who have difficulty in believing not only what Moses wrote but that he wrote at all, it will not, I trust, be amiss to consider the nature of that authority which our Lord cited as indisputable, and to define the principle on which we proceed in the interpretation thereof.

RULE OF HISTORIC CRITICISM.

The candid reader will admit that as to arrive at the *meaning* of any history, as distinct from its truth in the abstract, it is necessary to take into account all the persons, characters, and circumstances, with which the author deals, and that to omit any one of them is to do the author an injus-

tice, and must lead to partial and erroneous views, it is necessary to apply the same rule to the judgment of the scriptures. The justice of this law may further appear by taking an analogous case. Suppose there to be extant but one ancient history of Rome, with an entire absence of correlative matter, such as archives or records of any kind, to elucidate its meaning, so that in forming our judgment we are thrown back on the consistency of the history with itself, and its harmony with its unquestioned relations. It is plain that to judge that history fairly and intelligibly we must judge it on this principle. We must take it just as it stands. To do otherwise, to omit any part thereof in our criticism, would be the sure way to fail in determining not only its probable truth in the abstract, which is a distinct question, but what the writer really meant his readers to understand. The judicious critic would avoid such partiality, weighing every word, and omitting nothing that might throw light on the author's meaning. This would be a case fairly parallel to the criticism of the Bible. Moses is the only authority for the history of the world before his own time. It is plain that to arrive at his true meaning we must apply this principle, that is, deal with his work as we deal with any other history, omitting no word, no PERSON, no character, no relation. The fact that it contains an element special to itself, namely the supernatural, does not warrant our dispensing with the principle, but rather renders its application the more imperative. We confine ourselves to this, the prime end in all literary investigations, namely, the determination of the author's MEANING. And as we are now pro-

posing to consider the author himself, and his method of writing and transmitting his work, we have thought it well to mention the rule here; observing by the way that its application settles the question of the authorship of the book that goes by his name, even as it settles the authorship of the books held to be written by Homer, Herodotus, Livy, and many others about whom there is no dispute; the fact of this acceptance in the earliest ages being deemed to be sufficient; a rule which pre-eminently applies to the authorship of Moses, accepted as it was in all ages to the day of Christ.

WHENCE MOSES ACQUIRED HIS INFORMATION OF THE PAST.

Following the above law we have now to consider the authority on which the narratives already referred to rest. The authority is Moses, of whom and of whose work and method of work we know more than of all ancient authors put together. And first we observe that the series of narratives in the book of Genesis are not properly histories, but chronicles. The historian, in the proper sense of the term, is an enquirer into the past, gathering his materials from every available quarter; always seeking the best, namely, that which most nearly approaches the original source. The first witnesses are dead and beyond his reach, but his purpose ever is to get as near to them as possible. Hence his satisfaction when he gets hold of an original document, a chronicle for instance. For a chronicle is written at the time when the events took place, to assure the descent of truth. It is just this which

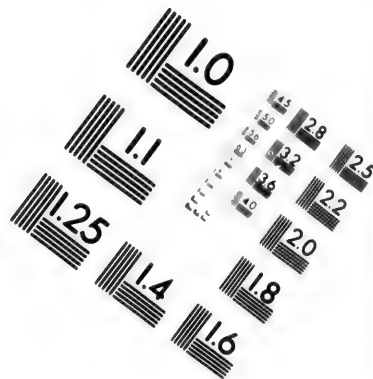
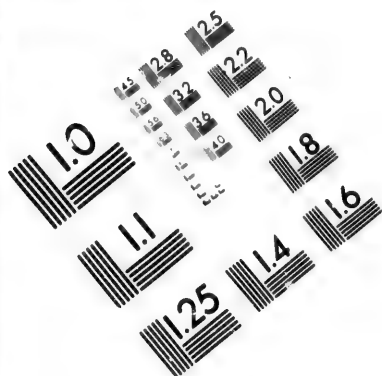
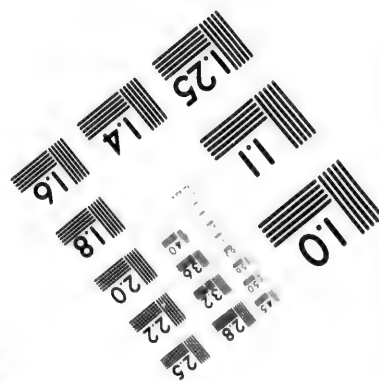
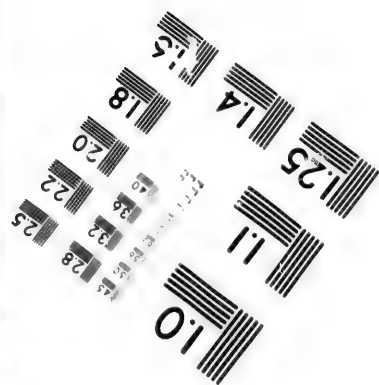
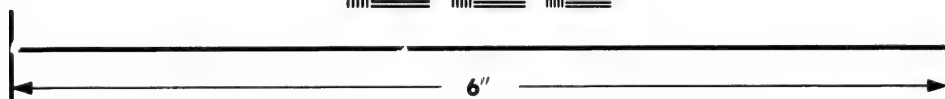
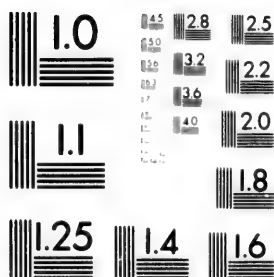


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makes the Bible narratives different from history in the general sense of the term, and superior to it in respect of assurance. Thus St. Luke says that what he wrote was what he had heard from eye-witnesses,—not casual persons, but official, “ministers of the word”—and that he wrote with this purpose, that his reader might “know the CERTAINTY” of the things in which he had been instructed. The student of scripture is also in this sense a Theophilus. Having been instructed concerning the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, he has recourse to the scriptures that he may know through them the *certainty* of what he has learned. For all scripture is written on the testimony of eye-witnesses. The scripture narratives are contemporary chronicles. What we hope to show is that Moses had this advantage, access to original records. He himself stands as an example of this method of record. For, after the discomfiture of Amalek, we read, “The Lord said to Moses, WRITE THIS FOR A MEMORIAL IN A BOOK, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” Many such commands there are, and to the same end, namely, certainty. Thus the Lord said to Isaiah, “Go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come, for ever and ever.” And as, according to the scriptures, God does not change, we must take this as his unvarying method of assuring the certainty of his word.

The reader will doubtless have noticed in the book of Genesis a distinction between contemporary chronicles, and the insertions of the author, who, in transcribing them, made occasional notes or obser-

vations of his own. It is not necessary to the work of a historian that any remarks of this kind should be thrown into footnotes or an appendix. They are equally discernible when found in the body of the work. For instance, the statement that the man Moses was meek above all men on the face of the earth, was evidently made by another writer after his death. And many such like instances there are. The whole of the tenth chapter of Genesis is clearly of this kind, and readily distinguishable from the chronicles which precede and follow it, the allusions therein pointing to a condition of things which could not have existed earlier than the time of Moses. The purpose, also, for which it was inserted may readily be perceived on examination of its contents. That the narratives in Genesis were formed in this manner, namely, by the writing of contemporaries and eye witnesses, is, I think, placed beyond all doubt by the fact, already noticed, that at the beginning, when the Redeemer's line of descent was settled, a book, called the "Book of the Generations of Adam," was opened, in which to record from age to age the names in that line, beginning with Seth, Adam's elect son. It is certain that this book or roll descended in this line to posterity. Containing the names in unbroken sequence from Adam to Eber, in whose days the earth was divided, and from Eber to Abraham, and from Abraham to Moses, we can see how the book would reach his hands. And if, as is most reasonable to believe, the chronicles of other events were also written as they occurred, they also would come into his possession in like manner. For the book referred to was plainly official. Adam was an

official person; so were his descendants who succeeded to the headship of the elect line. When we consider, looking upward from the Dispersion, that Noah, Lamech, Enoch, were prophets, and, looking downwards, that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, were prophets also, there can be no doubt as to how the safe descent of the records was assured. The writers and guardians of them were not men of straw, but men elect and chosen to keep alive among men the knowledge of God, and the promise of a Savior to come. The book referred to, accrediting Adam as first visible head of that line, defines the succession from him through Seth, as clearly as was afterwards defined the succession of the priesthood from Aaron. In no other way than by the existence in the family of successive chronicles, can we understand the allusions afterwards so frequently made to the history as obviously known to those to whom these allusions were addressed. The name of Jehovah was known to Abraham when he was called. He built an altar, and called upon "the name of Jehovah," thus showing how well he knew and practiced that distinguishing mark of the chosen family of which he was the head. And because he knew it, and because he believed and trusted in it, he forsook his country and his father's house, and went forth a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth. When God so frequently reminded his people that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it presupposes on their part an acquaintance with God's dealings with their fathers. When the people were commanded to keep the Sabbath, it presupposes their acquaintance with its original institution. When Israel sought passage through the land of

Edom, as their *brother*, it presupposes their acquaintance with the origin of this relation. When Moses himself chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of the king's court in which he had been brought up, it presupposes an acquaintance on his part with God's dealings with his people in the times past. We may perhaps see in the words which extended the dominion of Israel to the Euphrates, while embracing the land of Canaan, less a conquest, than a recovery of the portion assigned to the descendants of Shem in the partition of the earth, and of which Ham's ambition had deprived them. Certainly we can see a reference to the latter transaction in the words of Moses' song. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, [A. V.] he set the bounds of the peoples [R. V.] according to the number of the children of Israel." This is undeniably a historic reference, made in the manner in which God's dealings in the past are constantly referred to in the scriptures, implying the existence of a written record of the division of the earth among the sons of Noah, and the separation of the family in the birthright line from the rest of the peoples, the statement that "he separated the sons of ADAM," agreeing with the original record of the establishment of the birthright line in ADAM through SETH. In all which, and many more such references, it is plain that God, in speaking to his people, spoke to them not as then known to them for the first time, but as a God known to their fathers from generation to generation, and also that Moses had in his hands the actual chronicles of ancient events,

preserved and handed down through a privileged line of men.

The work of Moses, as author, falls naturally into two parts, the past and the present; and these are clearly distinguishable; the past contained in what is called the book of Genesis, the present the events of his own lifetime. With regard to the former, which alone we are here considering, we observe, keeping to our principle, that his information must have come to him in part by revelation. In no other way, for instance, could he have obtained the account of the creation. And when we consider how much God told him concerning things present and things to come, speaking to him, as the scripture says, "mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches," the ground of his authority for this part of his work becomes very plain.

As to the human part of the history, as the scripture never represents God as doing supernaturally what man can do for himself, this must have come to him through a human channel, and from the necessity of the case, by written documents. The nature of the narratives in the book of Genesis forbids the idea that he wrote them by inspiration. No living man could have told them to him as an eye-witness. Tradition is equally out of the question, for, besides the uncertainty, the minute and commonplace particularity with which the various scenes are narrated shows the work of eye-witnesses. Eye-witnesses for recent events (such as Luke for instance refers to as the authority for his history) and the written testimony of eye-witnesses for ancient events, are the constant and only law on

which we are required to believe any history, most of all the scripture histories.

How the records of the past must have come into the hands of Moses, although he was not in the Redeemer's line, is plainly deducible from the history, for he, too, was descended from Seth through Jacob. In Jacob the nation of Israel began. With change of office came change of name. Instead of head of a family, having become head of a nation, his name was no more called Jacob, but Israel. By divine appointment the genealogy was fixed in Judah's line. But Israel being soon to become a nation, the other sons of Jacob were not excluded, but all were numbered among the people of God. By the same divine appointment the priesthood was settled in Levi. Of this tribe Moses was born, and being, as type of Christ, made prophet, priest and king, and having so become in his day chief ruler, all archives and muniments, being no longer the property of a family, but of a nation, would be at his disposal. The hereditary custodian of the records was of the tribe of Judah. Whoever he might be, and I think his personality is easily discernible, he would recognize the Lawgiver's right to their possession for his great work. That work was to preserve and record in ONE BOOK the history of God's people from the beginning to the end of his own ministration. Although, for convenience of reference, no doubt, that book has been, we know not by whom, divided into five books, they are never so much as named afterwards, that I know of, by any of the inspired writers, either of the Old or New Testaments. Even before the book was finished, and while he was writing it, it was still called THE

BOOK—quite after the human fashion—and after it was finished, it was ever referred to as the Book; the book of the law of Moses; the book of the covenant; the book of the Law of the Lord; the book of Moses. All God's people are as one in calling the scriptures, whether of Moses, or the prophets, or the apostles, one book, the Bible, as engaged in one subject, the word of him who speaks to his people from the beginning. For thus it is written again, "Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah; no one thing of these shall fail." But this is literally true of the writings of Moses. Whether by original composition, or by compilation and transcripts, his whole work is contained in one book.

The reader may perhaps perceive the force of the foregoing conclusions more clearly if we consider that the book of Moses, relative to the past, was a family book, not a family in the sense in which the faithful of all nations are one family, but a family of earthly descent, and so, suggestive of a familiar analogy. We know with what care the records of any family of note are kept, and how readily distinguishable they are from outside history, while, at the same time, they furnish the most reliable materials for history, so far as family events are concerned. The case we are considering is stronger; for the events in the book of Moses are chiefly domestic. At least it is not outsiders writing the history of a family, but a family writing chronicles for the information of their descendants. And as we have on record the very beginning of the family book, with the narratives which could have proceeded only from eye-witnesses who were members of the family, we have the utmost certainty of the

manner in which the records of the past reached the hands of Moses.

Having seen how, according to what we conceive a just law of interpretation, Moses must have performed the first part of his work as author, namely, by transcribing with notes the chronicles down to the death of Joseph and the persecution ensuing, we have now to consider the second part of his work, namely, the history of his own times; which, after a brief filling up of the interval between the death of Joseph and his own birth, begins with the latter event. As our purpose is not to repeat the history, but to show its method and origin, our reference will be brief. His birth and bringing up, his casting in his lot with God's people, his commission from the Lord out of the burning bush to deliver them out of Egypt, their exodus and journey through the wilderness to the borders of the promised land, under his conduct, the giving of the law, and all the marvels attendant thereupon, are too familiar to the reader to require more than this passing notice. We will only make this remark. This history is not an autobiography. Nothing in it reminds us of this style of writing. His writing in the third person is not like that of Cæsar, for instance, in his commentaries, where it is still Cæsar that is magnified, doing all things according to the counsel of his own will. The constant repetition of the formula, that the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, is the key to all his work. He did nothing of his own initiative. As God's servant in the household of faith, as lawgiver, prophet, priest and king, he showed forth not his own glory but the glory of

Jehovah, the glory of him who was and is to come.

It may, however, be useful to dwell a little more at length on the concluding part of the history to show its continuity; and to make plain that, as there was no break between the past and the present, so there was no break between the present and the future.

The concluding scenes of the life of Moses are marked with a great solemnity. They properly begin with that extended series of discourses contained in the book called Deuteronomy, in which he reviews God's dealings among the people, mingling with his reminiscences the most solemn adjurations to fidelity and obedience. The destined period of forty years' wandering in the wilderness had expired. His ministrations among them were ended. He had no more laws, no more commands, to give them from the Lord, except such as were proper to his approaching departure. These discourses, which must have taken many days to deliver, were now coming to a close. He declared that he had set before them life and death, blessing and cursing; and urged them by the strongest motives to choose life; to love the Lord their God, and to cleave to him; adding these words, "for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which Jehovah sware to thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give them."

After this he began to make preparations for his departure. First "He went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said unto them, I am a hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in; also the Lord hath said unto

me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan." But he bade them be of good courage, for the Lord himself would go before them, and Joshua should take his place as their leader. After this, by the Lord's command, and in the Lord's presence, Joshua was solemnly charged with the task of leading Israel into the promised land in the place of Moses. Then the Lord himself, to warn them of the ruinous consequences of unbelief and disobedience, dictated (see Num. 12: 8) to Moses a song, which he commanded him to write and to teach it to the children of Israel, to be a witness for him against them. This Moses accordingly did, adding many words of exhortation, as if he could not say enough to establish them in the right way.

The last thing which Moses did, as recorded by himself, was to put the book which he had now finished in a safe place. "It came to pass that when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."

His work, so far as he was permitted to write it himself, was now ended, but as if his last breath must be spent on behalf of the beloved among whom and for whom he had lived and labored for forty years, he, evidently in the spirit of prophecy, pronounced a blessing on all the tribes of Israel. It is written in full by another hand, with this preface. "This is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his

death." As Jacob blessed the tribes one by one in his dying hour, and another wrote the blessing and transmitted it to posterity, so did Moses bless Israel, tribe by tribe, concluding with these words concerning the Israel of God. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

These were his last words. His voice was heard no more on earth, until, in his glorified body, he appeared and spoke with the incarnate Jehovah "mouth to mouth" on the Mount concerning the decease which Jesus was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Having finished his work, he went up into the Mount to die. And the Lord buried him; and, says a writer, in a later age, "No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

The contemporary chronicle thus sums up his history. "And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab; so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended."

And a chronicler in a later age summed up his character in the following note: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel."

Thus ends the history of Moses. His labors as author were completed. He had transcribed the chronicles which had come into his hands through an unbroken line of ancestors from the beginning of the world to his own birth. He had written the Lord's dealings with his people from that time to the day when he pronounced his final blessing, and he had provided for the safe custody of all those writings and records by placing them in the sanctuary by the side of the ark, in charge not only of the priests but of the elders of the people.

JOSHUA AS WRITER AND LEADER AFTER MOSES.

It cannot be doubted that it was Joshua who continued the records when Moses laid down the pen. He was Moses' minister and constant attendant while alive, and his successor in the command when he was dead. For the same reason we cannot doubt that he was the writer of the book which goes by his name, the book of Joshua. The same spirit of self-effacement pervades his style. Whatever was done the Lord was the doer of it. Joshua led the people under the immediate command of the "Captain of the Lord's host," whose promise was, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee." He followed Moses, also, in that in his end, he urged upon the people counsels, warnings, and charges, to continue in obedience to Jehovah after he should have gone from amongst them. He also took care that the Lord's dealings with them during his ministration should not be forgotten. For we read, "JOSHUA WROTE THESE WORDS IN THE BOOK OF THE

LAW OF GOD." Another writer then takes up the story and records the death of Joshua. As we have seen, the Book of Moses is complete in itself. The invasion of the land under Joshua opens a distinct period of the national history. What Joshua added to the Book of Moses was a passing covenant, in which the people, seeing the fulfilment of all God's promises made by Moses, promised to be true and faithful to him. It was a supplementary note, and was no more a part of the book of Moses than a postscript commentary added to the book of a dead author, would be a part of that author's book. At the same time we see how the narratives and the law are spoken of as one book; and also how the method of chronicling pursued from the beginning, was still continued, and according to the testimony of all the scriptures, continued to the end, the certainty of the records being assured by the one invariable rule that they are the work of contemporaries and eye-witnesses, with no shadow of tradition to obscure their meaning.

THE UNCORRUPT DESCENT OF THE WRITINGS OF MOSES.

There is usually no mention made in history of precautions taken to ensure the descent of national records, yet we are sure, from the nature of the case, that such precautions there must in all cases have been. But as if nothing must be omitted to obviate doubt, special mention is made not only of the completion of the book of Moses, but of the means taken for its preservation. Here we might close this part of our inquiry, and justly regard the

existence of the book itself as proof sufficient of its genuineness, just as we do in other ancient histories. But there are reasons which will appear as we proceed why we should not deal with the fact so compendiously in this case.

We have already seen how Moses, when the Book was finished, delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark, and to "all the elders of Israel" with this charge, "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there as a witness against thee." Two ends then were sought in the safekeeping of the Book: first, one implied, namely the multiplication of copies from the original. It was a standard to which all must be conformed, just as standards of weight and measurement are laid up in a nation's archives to secure uniform and honest dealing with things weighed and measured. That this was in the Lawgiver's mind is plain: for, speaking by prophecy of the time when kingly government should be established, he commanded that their king, on ascending the throne, should make for himself a copy from this original for his guidance in rule and administration. By force of this arrangement alone, not a few copies would in course of time exist in Israel, and, looking only to the manual labor which went to their production, we may be sure they would be carefully preserved. Besides which, as to keep the law was as necessary to the people as to their rulers, it being enjoined on all, in the most particular and personal manner, to know the law, and meditate upon it, in order that they might do right in the sight of the Lord, it is evident that to have free and unimpeded

access to the scriptures, so far as circumstances would permit, was the right of every Israelite. Cases of judgment, indeed, were to be brought to the priests, as those whose office required special devotion to this study, but their judgment must be strictly in accord with that which was WRITTEN; and did not supersede the duty incumbent on the people to study the scriptures for themselves. It is easy to see, then, how copies of the book whose instructions all were to follow, would be multiplied. There must be at the very least, were it only for teachers, copies in the centers of population, where there were synagogues for worship and reading the law. Just as in civil matters, juris-consults must have copies of the law from which to answer inquiries, so priests, prophets and teachers, in Israel, must have had at hand the law which it was their duty to explain and enforce. Nor can it be doubted that, as free access to the scriptures which they were so imperatively commanded to obey, was the common right of all classes, not a few, who could afford it, would have copies made for themselves. For, unlike statutes on special subjects and of limited application, this law, relating to every thought and deed of every member of the commonwealth from the least to the greatest, must have unimpeded circulation.

Add to this a deeply-rooted sentiment of the sanctity of the law in the minds of the people. The committal of the sacred volume to the custody of the elders of the people, as the very essence of their national life and existence, was made when the reputation and authority of their lawgiver were at their height; when the marvels of their deliverance

were fresh in their minds; when the terrors of Sinai still burdened the national conscience. So impressed were they with these, and the awful denunciations against any who should dare to tamper with these writings, that the feeling of their sanctity grew with some into a superstition, so that they dreaded to deal even in the most innocent fashion with the book which they were transcribing lest they should make a mistake in a single jot or tittle thereof. To this must be added a motive of national pride, powerful in every nation, especially in Israel, that in this book lay the very roots of their pre-eminence over all nations of the earth. So powerful were these motives for keeping the writings of their Law-giver pure, that I doubt whether a single instance can be found of a prophet of the Lord charging any, whether priests or people, with changing or corrupting them; though often charged with disobeying the word written, and with keeping it out of sight, making it of no effect by their inventions and traditions.

But there was a second reason for laying up the Book in the sanctuary, and it is thus expressed, "that it may be there as a WITNESS against thee." Now, doubtless this end was in part accomplished by the spreading abroad of the word from this center among all the people. Wherever it came it was a witness against ungodliness and sin. But the language indicates a specific, rather than a general, fulfilment, a fulfilment in a future age. "Take THIS book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark, that IT may be THERE for a witness against thee," words which seem to indicate that this very volume, this original, was to become a witness against the

rebellion of God's people in a future time. Now the testimony of a book is not so much in its identity, although that is often impressive, as in its contents. The mere existence of the book in the sanctuary, as long as it was unknown and unread, was of no effect, but when discovered and heard, it would speak with a living voice. And so it came to pass. Eight hundred years afterwards, by the merest accident, as we say, this identical volume was brought to light, opened, and read, and great was the effect of its appearance. It became a living witness and after this manner it was brought to light.

Josiah was repairing the house of the Lord as part of the work of reformation which he had zealously begun in the early part of his reign. The persons to whom he had entrusted the work had, of necessity, in company with the priests, access to all parts of the building, the prohibition to enter the holy place applying only to times of ministration, and thus the book was discovered, presumably lying in its proper place, not in the ark, but by its side. Its discovery is thus narrated: "Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of the Lord by the hand of Moses." The revised version rightly says, "THE book," the adjunct, "by the hand of Moses," dispensing with the article in the Hebrew, clearly implying that it was the very volume laid up by Moses in the sanctuary. For it could not be the intention to say that the book of the law was written by the hand of Moses, whether his own, or that of an amanuensis, no one doubting that, but that it was the very volume which, by Moses' command, was placed by the side of the ark. This book Hilkiah gave to Shaphan, the scribe, and he carried

it to the king, and read it to the king. And now two surprising things happened. First the discovery was made that the king did not know that such a book was in existence, or else supposed that it had been lost; still less did he know that when he began his reign he ought to have been provided with a copy. Secondly the book now became a LIVING WITNESS in his hands, filling him with terror at the judgments which, according to the book, impended over the nation. When we consider the black reign of Manasseh, during which, for more than fifty years, he had filled the house of the Lord with idolatrous altars, and the equally black reign of Amon, his son and successor, of whom it is said that he did worse than his father, for he restored the idolatrous rites of which his father had repented, but did not repent himself, we cannot wonder that Josiah, son of the one and grandson of the other, should have been brought up in much ignorance of a book which perforce had lain hid all these years. His grandfather's repentance would not have been altogether without effect, though he was only six years old when Manasseh died. Something also of the reformation wrought by his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, could hardly have failed to reach his ears. Impelled by convictions thus casually acquired he began to purify the sanctuary with a zeal not inferior to that of his ancestor. It is inconceivable that the book which at length brought him full light should have lain hidden so long but by the treachery or cowardice of the priests. Their influence in the palace was not less than their authority in the temple. It is singular that the high priest did not find the book till Josiah had begun, and was

determinedly carrying on, the work of reformation. It is possible, but not very probable, that he did not himself know of its existence. At the same time there is surely nothing in the history to forbid the suspicion that he may have made a virtue of necessity. He could not hinder the reformation carried on with so much zeal by the king; it was but human to wish to share the honor of bringing it to pass. There are not wanting signs of this time-serving policy on the part of the priests. It was by their help that Ahaz—and I think he was the first king that did so—set up an idolatrous altar in the house of the Lord; on the other hand, there is no sign that the priests hindered Hezekiah in removing such abominations when they saw that he was determined to do so. Most assuredly Manasseh could not have renewed and multiplied them as he did, without the assistance or connivance of the priests. I think Jehoiada is the last priest up to this time mentioned with approval; Jehoiada who restored the legitimate sovereignty, and whose son, Zechariah, a prophet, was slain, as our Lord said, between the temple and the altar, because he reprov'd the people for their idolatry. It was the king who slew him. It was no light matter, therefore, to go against the king, whether for good or evil; nor was it strange that the priests should side with the king when they could not resist him; or that they should let the book lie hid, as it did lie hid all the days of Manasseh and Amon, rather than produce it for the king's reproof and their own peril, or that they should bring it to light when they knew that the king would accept it with favor, and perhaps, honor and reward them for the discovery. But to let the

book lie hid, was different from destroying it, or tampering with its contents. All that was needed for their own safety and the preservation of their influence was to keep it out of sight. They knew very well that if they destroyed it, it would but affect a particular volume, venerable from its age and antecedents, but would leave untouched the numerous copies throughout the land, wherefrom the prophets derived their instructions and rebukes, and the people their consolation and their light. That the book brought to Josiah was genuine, and not a new or a fragmentary production, is evident from the king's emotion on receiving it. Most assuredly he would take it in his hands, examine it, and satisfy himself that it was indeed the veritable book of Moses, and that its contents were of momentous import to himself and his people. It is remarkable that the king did not seek peace to his troubled spirit from the priests, but from the Lord himself at the mouth of a woman, a prophetess. After hearing her confirmation of the terrible judgments pronounced in the book, and a special message of peace from the Lord to himself, he himself proceeded to make all these things known abroad with the utmost publicity.

This is what we read: "Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the prophets, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small, and he read in their ears all the words of THE BOOK

OF THE COVENANT that was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and with all his soul to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant?"

This covenant was not like the covenant of the law, but a renewed engagement on the part of the people to keep the law. Such was their covenant in the last days of Moses, of which it is expressly said that it was beside the covenant which had been made in Horeb. Such were the covenants made under Joshua, under the High Priest Jehoiada, and under Hezekiah the king, wherein the people bound themselves anew to fidelity and obedience. In these engagements there were none of the signs or ceremonies which attended the making of the covenant of the law. That covenant was spoken from Sinai, amid signs of terror and awe. It was written in a book, called the book of the covenant, with sacrifice and sprinkling of blood. Its original on tables of stone was laid up in the ark, which was thence called the ark of the covenant. The ten commandments written on these tables were evidently first copied into the book of the covenant, in which also was written their expansion into judgments on the minutest affairs of life spoken by the Lord himself to Moses. The book thus begun was not finished till the end of Moses' life. We repeat, as a thing most necessary to be remembered, that the ten commandments, written by the finger of God, were placed in the ark; the book, containing their expan-

sion, development, and effect, during the lifetime of Moses, BESIDE the ark. This was its virtual publication. Copies were made from it for the times; and have been multiplied till they have spread over all the world. The book was its own witness, read as it was in the ears, and submitted to the gaze of the assembly of the learned and unlearned men, official persons, priests, prophets,—Jeremiah perhaps among them, for he had been prophesying five years at this time,—and all the people, godly and ungodly. They had doubtless, not a few of them, copies of their own, and all had heard the scriptures read in their synagogues or places of worship; but now they were to hear them read out of the very volume which, by the hand of their Lawgiver, had been laid up in the sanctuary. Now would their confidence in the accuracy of their own copies be confirmed or weakened. We little appreciate human nature, or understand the Jewish mind, if we doubt that, as soon as this feature of the assembly was proclaimed, the people would eagerly flock together to the place where they would hear the book read, and some, perhaps, be permitted to handle and inspect it. Some would be ready even to worship it for its antiquity, as they had worshiped the brazen serpent. But this was not the king's intention. The people were not brought together to witness the exhibition of a relic but to hear from the highest authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, the words and commandments of Jehovah out of the very book laid up in the sanctuary eight hundred years before.

The book written from this original is its own witness still, with more abundant proofs of its

genuineness than exist in the case of any other work. We read of more than one ancient writer exulting in the thought that his work would go down to posterity. He could do little more to this end than writing and sending it forth with such patronage as he could procure to make its way in the world through the mere force of its own merits. This was indeed the sole dependence of such writers. Far different was the hope concerning this book. The great antiquity of the writings of Moses envelopes them in a kind of mist to those who regard them afar off, but to those who view them eye to eye the mists disperse. We see the man himself at work on the book; we see him when it is finished taking the utmost precautions that human wisdom could suggest that it should not perish. We see a signal proof of the success of those precautions not only in the multiplication of copies but in the reappearance of the original itself after many ages. The period during which it lay hid is about that of the Domesday Book in England, and greater than that of Magna Charta. The coincidence is striking. They were in both cases national archives; only in the case of the book of Moses the precautions taken for their preservation are mentioned, whereas in the case of the others they are inferred. There is no reason to think that the book was less carefully preserved in the following ages. Israel never ceased to be a separate people, zealous for all that affected their national distinction. When in captivity the book was plainly in the possession of Daniel and his companions. It was a treasure regarded with admiration by those whose captives they were. "Sing us the songs of

Sion," they said. When Israel ceased to be a nation they still preserved the book. Wherever the apostles went preaching, they found the scriptures in the synagogues. No question was ever raised as to their genuineness, only as to their meaning and interpretation. When, yielding the scepter to the ascended Messiah, they still clung to the scriptures, as the chief surviving remnant of their ancient glory. But not they alone were interested in their preservation. Rather when they fell into the hands of the nation ordained to bring forth their fruits, the true Israel, they were preserved with the same jealous care, but with more intelligence.

We have this book, and we find it in harmony with itself and its relations. Its mere existence, as we have already shown, is *primâ facie* evidence of its genuineness. Of all objects which men desire to hand down to future generations a book, if worthy, is surest of descent. A sword, a robe, a necklace, a ring, a diamond, even unpublished family archives, may be lost or perish from the family heirlooms; they can never be recovered; but a published book, so long as it is prized, endureth forever.

Perhaps, next to Moses, Homer is—of secular writers—the most ancient whose work has come down to our own times. No question arises as to the genuineness of his work. No evidence is demanded in proof beyond that which the work itself affords. It speaks for itself. In no intervening period did any persons, like the seven writers of the New Testament, full of interest in his poem, refer to it, and quote from it, in such manner as to leave no doubt that they had before them the very

book which is in our own hands. No old writer, like Josephus, took pains to write a digest of the Iliad, or discoursed on the history and antiquities of its times. Or if we come to evidences disintombed from the bowels of the earth, those which confirm the Iliad, are not to be compared with those which confirm the scriptures generally and the book of Moses in particular. Nor, in point of fact, do any of those evidences, however abundant, make the conviction of the genuineness of the Iliad—to speak only of that—one whit stronger than that which is produced by the mere existence of the book itself. Judging, therefore, the Bible on accepted principles of historic criticism, its mere existence, in the absence of any reliable evidence to the contrary, is proof of its genuineness. As to the errors or obscurities arising from infirmities of copyists, or other causes, from which no book, even the Bible, can be held to be absolutely free, the candid critic knows how to distinguish them from the more serious machinations of fraudulent dealers and forgers.

If in the preceding pages I seem to have written somewhat too positively, it was not that I assumed to supersede the reader's prerogative to judge for himself, but, partly, to save words, and partly because I deemed it better to write in the form of truth, what, according to my personal conviction, the writer, as it seemed to me, intended to be accepted as true. I have religiously endeavored throughout to apply the just principle of historic criticism to the interpretation of the writer's meaning, nor, in filling up the spaces in the narratives, have I consciously introduced aught but what that

principle seemed to me to justify, and even to demand.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, if the principle which we have briefly endeavored to follow be sound—the principle, namely, of interpreting Bible history as we do all history, not from pre-conceived notions, but from the author's own standpoint, taking into account all persons, human and divine, and all things, natural and supernatural, so far as they are necessarily related to his design, the end being, first, to interpret his meaning, and then to judge its truth; if we have applied this principle fairly and truly, and have not, in filling up the spaces, exceeded the liberty allowed in interpreting all brief narrations, the reader will also, I trust, perceive the ground of the one truth we have sought to establish, namely, that it was the Son of God who, as God's Messenger or Angel, also called his Word, spake and executed God's will among men throughout the ages from the beginning. This, I apprehend, was the apostle's meaning when he said (Heb. 1) that by him God "made the ages," not the worlds, for I think the scripture speaks but of one world, but, as I conceive, the periods or dispensations of his deputed rule; the first of those periods being "the DAY that the LORD GOD"—whom we have seen to be the Son of God—"made earth and heaven." And this surely is shown by his own words, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22: 13, R. V.); for if he be the beginning and the end, he is also all that comes between.

A like unity has, I trust, also been made apparent in respect of the *authority* for this truth, namely, the writings of Moses, out of which, like the growth of a tree, is evolved the whole mystery of the Son of God, from the first of the ages to the day of his appearing. Reject this greatest of the prophets, and there is no Bible, no Israel, no promises, no commandments, no Christ.

If, then, the roots of the Gospel be in the beginning,—even the name of God, and of the Son of God (Prov. 30: 4), made so much of in the Scriptures; the Redeemer's electing grace; the new creation by his Son; the fountain of Israel after the flesh, and of Israel after the Spirit,—we should not lightly regard it as do some, or deny it as do others, but search it profoundly. There is a mysterious bias in our nature which opposes the doctrine of salvation by the Son of God. Men do not naturally disbelieve in God as God; nor in the supernatural,—far from it; nor in some sense in atonement,—witness propitiatory sacrifices of every kind and degree; nor in a judgment to come, and good beyond the grave; but only in God as revealing himself by his Son. To this they have almost an instinctive repugnance. We have seen the earliest exhibition of this enmity in the fraud and jealousy of the Evil One, scouting and ridiculing the divine prohibition; and it is surely one part of the mystery of sin, "the sin of the world," that from this source the enmity descended on and infected the whole family.

Reader, interpret the Bible for yourself. Every man of honest mind, whether scholar or not, is qualified to judge Bible truth. For, said our Lord, *Wisdom is justified of all her children*. If, then, the

children of God, men of honest, truthful minds, can so reason as to justify God, it must be that his words are in their hearts and minds. For, indeed, the language of the Bible is the language of nature, the language common to mankind, written, not for the scholar but for man. The learned diction in which the truth is sometimes sought to be conveyed is learned only in sound. Sift it, as the miner sifts for gold, and the residuum of truth falls to the bottom, if the truth be there. No separate language was formed to tell of God and his works. When it is said that the Lord God MADE the heavens and the earth, and that he FORMED the man dust of the ground,—the self-same words which are used of the potter or the tailor,—no scholarship is required for their true application. Thus meditated upon and interpreted, the scenes in the garden, which at first appear a sketch, become to the mind a finished drama; the action full of human interest; the scenery natural and charming; the persons moving and speaking according to their proper characters; the Lord God with them in truth and goodness, majesty and power. Here is scope for the chastened imagination, its flights limited indeed to the field of the story; but to us a field how wide, embracing heaven and earth and hell; how peopled by beings, human and divine, good and evil, angels and devils and men! Were it but an epic, it has all the marks of creative genius and literary skill, so that even the natural mind can comprehend and enjoy it; how much more, though with joy and trembling, the spiritual mind, receiving it, not as a work of fancy, but as divine absolute truth, in which he is himself profoundly and personally interested and concerned.

Christian life is given to be progressive like all life. It is lawful and pleasant, indeed, for the newly-born to feast their souls on fat things full of marrow, on wines on the lees well refined, even as youth is ever the season of joy and gladness. At the same time they are admonished that it is not wise to stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children; they should go on unto perfection, and, while in malice they remain children, in understanding they should be men.

NOTES.

1. In our remarks on learning we by no means intend to disparage scholarship, so far as it is pertinent to the case. Some knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is desirable. Among the vast stores of information within his reach, the reader's own good sense will select what he needs. The use of commentaries requires judgment; for, besides tending to supersede personal investigation, such as the apostle speaks of in "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," we cannot admit that they are all reliable. This remark, indeed, applies to religious books in general, and even to sermons. We conclude that the prevalence of error requires that the student be not only a learner but a judge, even as the Scripture says, teaching us that we should of our own selves judge what is right," and, "he that is spiritual judgeth all things."

2. The reader will have perceived between the lines the presence of objections against the Bible. To have dealt with them controversially, besides confusing our main purpose, would have taken too

much room. The strength (or weakness) however, of the paramount objection may appear from one consideration. Every religion which solicits the faith or attention of mankind deals with the supernatural. To reject the scriptures, therefore, on that sole ground would seem to be neither more nor less than atheism. The momentous nature of such a conclusion in face of a book like the Bible must be left to the reader's own reflections.